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ABSTRACT

This practicum involved the design and implementation of inservice training sessions for educators, to reduce the incidence of limited English proficient (LEP) pupils being inappropriately referred for possible special education placement. The inservice sessions covered the difference between a linguistic diversity and a handicap, prereferral strategies, and training in the Spanish language in order to help Hispanic children and families feel more comfortable in the school and community. Hispanic parent seminars were developed to increase parent advocacy for their children's programs. A booklet on prereferral strategies was also written and disseminated. The booklet describes the LEP student in the mainstream classroom; the role of the English-as-a-Second-Language teacher; the assessment of LEP students; and the roles of parents, administrators, and interpreters. Appendices contain copies of survey forms and questionnaires, a copy of the booklet on prereferral strategies, and practicum evaluation data. (Contains approximately 60 references.) (Author/JDD)

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ED 366 139

# Reducing the Inappropriate Referrals of Language Minority Youngsters to Special Education Settings Through Teacher Training

by

Barbara Christina

Cluster XLI

A Practicum II Report presented to the Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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Barry Birnbaum, Ed.D.

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## ABSTRACT

Reducing the Inappropriate Referrals of Language Minority Youngsters to Special Education Settings Through Teacher Training: Christina, Barbara A., 1993: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood.

Inservice Training/Limited English Proficient/Special Education/Hispanic American/Minority Group Children/Cultural Differences/Non English Speaking/Multicultural Education/Referral

This practicum was designed for educators working with limited English speaking students. These students were being inappropriately referred to the Committee on Special Education for testing of a suspected handicap where none existed. Many of these referred youngsters were being placed in special education classes. Several inservice trainings were designed and implemented for educators to reduce the inappropriate referrals of limited English proficient pupils to special education placements. A parent component was also initiated.

The writer developed two inservice courses for educators. These courses gave to participants practical, easy to implement prereferral strategies. Implementation of these strategies was one way to enable educators to distinguish a cultural linguistic diversity from a deficit/handicap. Two courses were initiated on training in the Spanish language since the majority of youngsters were Hispanic. Hispanic parent seminars were planned in order to increase parent advocacy for their children's programs. The writer also wrote a booklet on prereferral strategies that was widely disseminated.

Analysis of the data revealed that educators who took part in the inservice training on prereferral strategies did acquire the strategies needed to work well with limited English proficient students. The two Spanish language courses equipped participants with phrases to help the Hispanic child and family feel more comfortable in the school and community. The Hispanic parent program did create a small interested group of parents but did not generate sufficient interest and attendance. The booklet on prereferral strategies was positively evaluated and acknowledged as one source of information on prereferral strategies.

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(Signature)

# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

## Description of Work Setting and Community

The work setting for the writer is a Bilingual/English as a Second Language Technical Assistance Center (BETAC). The BETAC office is funded by a grant from the writer's state education department. The writer is coordinator of the BETAC and is responsible for general administration of the center and supervision of the BETAC staff. The staff consists of a bilingual resource specialist and a secretary. The languages spoken by the coordinator and resource specialist are Spanish, French and English.

The bilingual resource specialist is originally from Peru and was hired in January 1992 to work as the writer's assistant. Until that date, the writer had the prime responsibility to fulfill state education department (SED) activities mandated in the BETAC grant.

The BETAC office is housed in a Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) and the BETAC coordinator/ writer has a local cabinet level supervisor in the BOCES. The BETAC office is also supervised by a regional director from the state education department.

BETACs are located statewide. Currently there are ten BETACs. The function of the BETAC offices is to provide technical assistance to school districts in their BOCES regions. The technical assistance is provided to those districts who have limited English proficient students enrolled in their school buildings.

The writer's BOCES/BETAC serves 27 rurally isolated school districts. The BETAC office serves 22 out of these 27 districts. These districts have in total an enrollment of over 500 limited English proficient (LEP) students.

The writer's districts are situated on two peninsulas known as the North Fork and the South Fork. There are also two islands accessible by ferry which are part of the BOCES catchment area. The size of the school districts vary. There are one room schoolhouses to campuses which house several school buildings. The smaller districts have been encouraged to, but have never merged with the larger ones.

Transportation to a focal point of service for these districts is difficult. Thus the writer and her assistant spend time traveling to the various districts to assist administrators and English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers with their programs of instruction.

Many of the LEP students and families who move into the BOCES catchment area are from Central and South America. Therefore, the predominant language of many LEP students is Spanish. A small minority of these families experience

middle class living standards. However, the majority live at the level of upper lower class and lower lower class.

## Writer's Work Setting and Role

The role of the BETAC certificated personnel is to work with schools that have LEP students in attendance. The writer's aim is not only to provide technical assistance to ESL teachers, but to all educators. All educators includes administrators, ESL teachers, mainstream teachers, special educators, and support personnel.

The writer tries to involve as many professionals as possible in her daily activities. She designs and implements inservice training unique to the needs of her region. The resource specialist and/or the writer visit schools in which language minority youngsters are enrolled. Workshops are presented by the writer and/or resource specialist at individual schools on topics requested.

The BETAC office houses a resource library accessible to school personnel. The library contains reference materials, bilingual dictionaries, sample workbooks, texts and cassettes, and assessment instruments to determine the level of proficiency in English for the newly arrived LEP student.

The writer also maintains a current list of interpreters and translators. These individuals may be speech therapists, psychologists, educators, and/or other

bilingual professionals. School district personnel access these individuals from the BETAC office to assist in evaluation, interpretation at parental conferences, translation of letters, and translation in any other needed capacity.

The writer visits each district during the school year several times. She encourages administrators to apply for sources of funding for their LEP students' programs. She assists with the completion of these federal or state proposals.

The writer is keenly aware of the nature of second language acquisition and focuses on helping educators to understand the difficulty of the task for newly arrived foreign students. She has studied both French and Spanish and has spent time living in France. She attended the University of Grenoble and knows how frustrating it can be to have to perform academically in a second language. The writer, therefore, has developed a sensitivity for second language learners and their unique cultures.

She has also taught foreign languages, English as a Second Language, and is currently an administrator in the BOCES I Middle Management Unit. She has always assumed leadership roles in professional organizations and is a frequent conference presenter. Therefore, she has had adequate training and experience to perform well in her present role as coordinator of BETAC.

In June 1992 there were 30 ESL teachers serving an increasing LEP population of approximately 510 students. This population increases yearly by about 100 to 150 newly arrived immigrants. There is much farm work in the writer's catchment area that is not only seasonal. Therefore, many immigrant families are attracted to the area. These good people also work as domestics or as laborers to repair homes, motels, and farm equipment.

The BETACs were created by the state education department by the former Division of Bilingual Education Director to be of service to bilingual/bicultural parents and children, and the communities and schools which house them. BETACs provide a liaison between their BOCES catchment area schools and communities, and the state education department.

# CHAPTER II

# STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

## Problem Description

The problem the writer discerned in her catchment area referred to the educational programs and/or placements provided to LEP students. Precisely, the writer was acutely aware that limited English proficient students were being inappropriately referred to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) for testing and probable placement in settings for handicapped students.

Evidence of the problem was presented to the center by ESL teachers, LEP students, language minority parents, school officials, and other educators who were working daily with these students. The writer feared that inappropriate placement of LEP students would be destructive to their self-esteem and success in the American school system. Many of these bilingual/bicultural students have unique talents to offer society, and if their educational development was being distorted, society would be losing the resources of some very talented individuals.

Hence the writer viewed the stated problem as a serious one which was going to have long term detrimental effects on

the population involved.

## Problem Documentation

Evidence of the previously stated problem was gathered by the writer from her daily log, questionnaires, completion of evaluation forms at BETAC workshops, requests for technical assistance from the field, and testimony from professionals and students.

The writer maintains a daily log of requests for technical assistance from component school districts and had logged more than 65 requests between February 1992 and June 1992 from educators. Many of those inquiries dealt specifically with assessment of LEP students. Some district personnel were anxious to establish language dominance in the LEP student. Districts seemed to want this information before commencing the referral process. However, this was a strong indication to the writer that the referral was going to be unwarranted, i.e., there was going to be no documented evidence of attempts to remediate the learning conditions in the mainstream. This was a common procedure in many districts. Teachers initiated the referral process without substantial evidence that the language minority student could learn in the regular classroom. Establishment of language dominance was simply a way to assure themselves that they might be willing to test bilingually or biculturally.

The writer strongly recommended a bilingual/bicultural psychologist once the district personnel had decided to refer a language minority student. However, this approach did not lessen inappropriate referrals since the psychologist was not provided much background that could have led him/her to find causal evidence other than a handicap.

Other districts would ask for bilingual personnel to do the assessment, but only wanted part of the assessment, i.e., the IQ. Many psychologists with whom the writer works are hesitant to establish an IQ for a LEP student who may be illiterate in the first language ($L_1$) and struggling to learn the second ($L_2$). Hence these districts would then decide to use local psychologists who were unaware of the unique needs of second language learners, their unique cultural background, and their mode of living.

Some districts were not willing to pay the fee a trained bilingual/bicultural psychologist asked and decided once again to use a local psychologist with an untrained interpreter, i.e., an interpreter who did not know the referral process, the background of the LEP student, and theories of second language acquisition and biculturalism. Hence many LEP students were being inappropriately referred.

The writer's bilingual resource specialist would usually travel to these districts to administer some tests in the native language. Spanish is the language widely

spoken among the LEP students and families in the BETAC catchment area. The specialist is not in the position to make recommendations regarding further assessments. She explains her findings from the point of view of one schooled in bilingual education and from her own cultural perceptions of students immigrating from Central and South America. She can only advise, not recommend. Many schools continued the referral process even after the specialist recognized and advised that there seemed to be no real problem. The referral process unfortunately led to inappropriate class placements for these students. The specialist has training in theories of second language acquisition, bilingual education and has taught in her own native country, Peru. Her judgement regarding students' abilities should have been taken seriously by district personnel, but unfortunately it was not.

At a Hispanic parent meeting sponsored by the BETAC office in April 1992 (Hispanics represent the largest minority language group in the writer's catchment area), a survey (see Appendix A) was distributed, followed by an open discussion which revealed dissatisfaction of all 19 parents present with their children's placements in school. One mother told the writer and her assistant that her child was considered "el último," the last. The talents of these children were not being recognized, but instead the mainstream decision makers believed these children were less

able due to skin color and linguistic diversity.

Therefore, when English was not readily acquired, the referral process began. Once the referral process was initiated, these students were then mislabelled and placed incorrectly in special classes. Educators falsely believed that English to learn academics was acquired as quickly as English to learn basic communication phrases. When this occurrence did not happen, the classroom teacher felt justified in commencing the referral process.

Skin color and language spoken still seemed to indicate to many of those entrenched in the mainstream culture that the student somehow presented/was born with a handicap. The writer's catchment area is predominantly rural with a well established Anglo culture.

A survey disseminated to ESL teachers and supervisors by the writer's office on the quality of BETAC services (see Appendix B) in the fall of 1991 indicated that parental liaison, i.e., parents being the link between home and school for the child, was not a high priority for LEP parents. Five out of 13 participating school district personnel rated statement #6 (parental liaison) low on the Likert scale for the survey. This rating demonstrates that lack of parental involvement by minority language parents created a communication gap between them and school officials. By not being an interested party in their children's education, these parents neglected to provide

valuable information about their children to the teacher. Parents who did not speak of their children's progress and/or lack of progress, their children's personalities, family situations and values were denying the educator access to vital information when a learning problem seemed to surface. With little background information from the home front, LEP children can be inappropriately referred to the CSE for testing in lieu of other interventions that could be used had the educators been cognizant of more information about the student.

The writer realized that language minority parents did not always feel welcome at school nor did school personnel reach out to them. There was no effort on either side.

At an early spring 1992 Hispanic Youth Leadership Institute (HYLI) cosponsored by the writer's office, other BETACs, SED, the State Assembly Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force, and private funding sources, the commissioner of education, i.e., the chancellor, stated to the Hispanic youth attending an education forum that "we have made no progress at all" in addressing the numerous and inappropriate referrals and placements of Hispanic students in special education classes.

The students, in presenting their resolutions to the panel of educators at the forum, entered into an open discussion with them. These youth, using either Spanish or English, acknowledged that their Hispanic classmates were

improperly placed in special education classes. The chancellor did not ask for more information on the reasons this was so, but acknowledged that this was truly a problem for which he had no answer. He stated openly and honestly his knowledge of inappropriate placement of Hispanic students in these classes.

At the HYLI, Hispanic students from the writer's catchment area presented their resolution to the Chancellor (see Appendix C) as they spoke of the misunderstandings by teachers of their efforts to acquire English for academic learnings. This failure to acquire English for academic learnings as quickly as English for social development leads educators to believe that the LEP students have a learning problem. Thus the process of inappropriate referrals is begun. The writer's student resolution specifies that educators should be required to study a foreign language and the culture of those who speak the language. These students wanted teachers to realize the difficulties associated with learning a second language well enough to be able to do advanced studies in that language. They also wanted educators to recognize that cultural differences may elicit different behaviors, but that these behaviors are not abnormal.

Nineteen educators indicated on a questionnaire (see Appendix D) that they were unaware of guidelines from SED and SED publications that deal with the proper assessment

and referral of LEP students with possible handicapping conditions. If educators were not reading the literature on the above cited areas, inappropriate assessment of LEP students would naturally lead to inappropriate placement in a special education setting.

Telephone requests by community members and requests from the BETAC Advisory Council, plus evidence from a questionnaire (see Appendix D), demonstrated to the writer that some training in the Spanish language and culture was warranted in order to facilitate communication with Hispanic children and their families on the part of educators. Professionals learning/using the language would have come to understand the frustrations of communicating in a second language, and that these frustrations were not an indication of poor intellectual abilities. Language learning and usage takes time and effort. Furthermore, children's self-esteem would be heightened by having their teacher communicate with them by using some phrases in their native language. These children could then be the experts in the language learning situation as the teacher attempted to use simple vocabulary in the child's maternal language. If self-esteem of youngsters is raised, they generally perform much better in class, and the number of inappropriate referrals would thus decrease. Furthermore, the teacher, the second language learner, would develop more sensitivity and empathy towards the LEP child as he/she struggles to comprehend a new

language and way of life.

Eleven out of 19 teachers completing evaluation forms for the writer's first practicum (see Appendix D) indicated the need for training in the area of inappropriate referrals of LEP students to the CSE. These teachers did not want to hear more theory and extensive research if the work of such theorists and/or researchers did not lead to the demonstration of doable, cost effective teaching strategies which would enable LEP students to meet with success in the mainstream setting.

Thus the evidence provided indicated to the writer that educators were unaware of current SED regulations to prevent the unwarranted referrals of LEP students and were unaware of the needs of the Hispanic community/families, their culture, and imposed alienation. This alienation and lack of community's/school's attention to the Hispanic community disrupted the Hispanic child's learning process and was leading educators to erroneously conclude that a handicap might be present in the Hispanic child.

The slow birth of Ku Klux Klan (KKK) activities uncovered in April 1992 further robbed these language minority families of their ethnic identity and family structure, with the result that their children were feeling defeated before passing through the school doors. The defeatist attitude carried by these children was leading to failure and inappropriate referrals from educators. Thus,

the child's inadequate perception of himself as a learner resulted in placements that further validated his self-negativism.

Therefore, evidence presented did clearly demonstrate that language minority children and families were at risk. Children were at risk of school failure and parents were at risk of failing to close the ever widening gap between home and school. Those decisions by educators which impacted on the lives of these children placed labels on them that did not always fairly match with their true abilities.

## Causative Analysis

It is the writer's belief that there were five causes for the problem.

a. The writer was concerned that the administrators, the ESL teachers, the mainstream teachers, the special educators, and other support personnel were not cognizant of regulations from SED. These regulations are specifically tailored to the appropriate referral process of limited English proficient students who seem to exhibit a handicapping condition.

b. The writer's prime concern was that those educators who have daily contact with LEP students were unaware of and/or did not use realistic and practical prereferral strategies. Use of such strategies could have prevented the inappropriate referrals and may have validated appropriate

ones.

Lack of knowledge of the "how to's" that prereferral strategies would give to teachers leads educators working with LEP students to become frustrated. This frustration is anxiety provoking for the educator, and the educators seem to feel that an alternate placement, i.e., a special class, would be better for the student. Hence a referral is initiated which, in many cases, is not necessary.

c. Another concern of the writer was that language minority parents felt unwelcome in their local schools and communities. They did not always know how to approach school officials, nor did school officials feel comfortable in approaching those who did not speak English well. These parents did not discuss their children's unique personalities, their children's talents or lack of ability, nor their children's programs/placements at school. It was the writer's distinct impression that language minority parents did not reach out to school officials, nor did school officials reach out to them.

d. The writer's next concern was that lack of some ability in the Spanish language caused educators to ignore the unique assets of bilingualism and the fascination of becoming acquainted with another culture. ESL teachers, mainstream teachers, special educators, and other support personnel had expressed to the BETAC office their interest to communicate in Spanish and to learn of different Hispanic

cultures.

Lack of ability in the Spanish language and lack of knowledge about Hispanic culture cause educators to distance themselves from their students. Some knowledge of the language and culture could only result in raising the self-esteem of second language learners when their teachers use their native language. Raising the student's self-esteem raises their inner beliefs that they can achieve and thus can ward off the referral process.

e. The writer's fifth concern was that escalating prejudice in her communities continued to isolate minority families. This isolation leads to subjugation of these families by the dominant Anglo culture. These feelings of subjugation are transmitted from parent to child, and the language minority child enters school feeling incapacitated due to skin color, language, and culture. This feeling of inadequacy leads to poor academic performance which in turn can be a cause for initiating the referral process by school officials.

The five causes described here were not unique to the writer's catchment area. Evidence statewide had already been acknowledged by the chancellor of the state education department, and newspaper articles (May 1992) had already indicated the overrepresentation of Hispanics in special education classes in locations outside the writer's catchment areas.

The causes the writer has presented indicate that a serious problem was at hand. Educators had to be cognizant of prereferral strategies, SED laws and regulations, and had to accord each student his/her rightful place in the school setting.

## Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

The preliminary literature review and subsequent review of the literature provide evidence of the nationwide concern of educators over the problem of inappropriate referral and placement of language minority students in classes for the handicapped. The literature highlights the following: bias in assessment instruments (Hamayan & Damico, 1991), lack of knowledge of instructional interventions/prereferral strategies, misunderstandings of the significance of cultural diversity of the LEP student, the need for language minority students to participate in school affairs, and the destructive effects of prejudices on minority children's learning. Evidence from the literature showed that the writer's problem is clearly recognized by renowned leaders in the field of bilingual education, special education, and bilingual special education.

Cummins (1989) states that those who test students are too quick to label a child as learning disabled. Current assessment policies are unfairly biased against cultural and linguistic minority students. Assessors have traditionally

been taught that if a student is referred, the problem lies within the student. Therefore, the problem is always found within the youngster, and the CSE and school district personnel usually concur with the assessors' evaluation. Thus the cultural and linguistic diversity of minority students is ignored in current assessment practices, and these students are inappropriately and unfairly placed in special education classes.

Cummins (1989) describes current practices in pedagogy. Teaching methodologies that transmit discrete skills do not make enablers of second language learners; rather this transmission pedagogy disables the learner. "Learned helplessness" is the eventual outcome of such instruction, and eventually the student is rendered even more helpless by placement in special classes.

Hamayan and Damico (1991) agree with Cummins (1989) in that current assessment practices can be disastrous to those who are culturally and linguistically diverse. Struggling to learn a second language and the slow process of acquisition is misunderstood by many educators. This misunderstanding leads to referral, and thus, due to inadequate referral systems and lack of trained bilingual/ bicultural personnel, many limited English proficient students are given a learning disability which in reality they do not own.

Olson (1991) adds another dimension to the assessment

and placement of minority language youngsters in special classes. She maintains that LEP students can be overrepresented in classes for the learning disabled, as do Cummins (1989) and Hamayan and Damico (1991). Too much caution and the threat of lawsuits lead many educators to deny disabilities when in reality a disability is present. In accord with Cummins (1989) and Hamayan and Damico (1991), Olson considers assessment to be an issue of concern when second language learners seem to present a handicap.

Olson (1991) paints a disturbing picture of educators so fearful of mislabelling that genuine handicaps are mistaken for linguistic differences, and students in need of special classes are denied access to them. The writer's aim was to prevent educators from initiating unwarranted referrals. Thus while she wishes to make her readers aware of the fear by educators of not referring when the referral is warranted, this situation was not the crux of her work.

The writer has become keenly aware of the delicate nature of assessment. Assessment of proficient English students is challenging enough to current educators; thus, the assessment of less proficient English speaking students seems to be even more demanding and does create havoc in the minds of those educators who really want the best for all children.

The literature demonstrates that the assessors of LEP students are not aware of students' cultural and linguistic

diversity (Hamayan & Damico, 1991). Bias in the dominant culture (Cummins, 1989), and the "over-identification vs. underidentification" (Olson, 1991) have inappropriately placed or failed to place minority language students in their optimal educational environment.

Further literature review connected with assessment shows that this area is an emerging topic of significance. It is also an area in which further research is needed. Ortiz and Polyzoi (1989) discuss the complexity involved in assessing the LEP student, i.e., is there a true language deficit or is the student in the process of acquiring a second language? Evidence seems to indicate that behaviors associated with acquiring a new language are misinterpreted as deficits or handicaps by untrained educators. The ERIC/OSEP Special Project Abstract 23 (1988) also demonstrates that assessment of LEP youngsters is challenging in that it is difficult to distinguish among behaviors which are indicative of deficit or acquisition of the second language ($L_2$). This abstract concurs with the research of Ortiz and Polyzoi (1989) and Ortiz and Maldonado-Colon (1986) in that a LEP student in the process of unfortunately losing his native language ($L_1$) and the attaining of a second language ($L_2$) can exhibit behaviors which may seem to the untrained observer/educator to be characteristics of a learning problem, i.e., a handicapping condition.

Wolfram (1990) states that standardized test scores expose the fact that $L_2$ learners do score lower than their "Anglo counterparts." Test authors do not standardize tests to include non-native speakers, and thus results continue to show inferior scores for language minority learners as compared to speakers of the majority language, English. These low scores can be a detriment for $L_2$ learners' proper class placement.

Cummins (1986) maintains that LEP students will continue to be inadequately referred and placed in special education because assessors can not resist trying to find the problem within the student, and do not focus on the problem of the more dominant societal structure, i.e., the ecological environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Cummins (1986) maintains that $L_2$ learners' and other minorities' success in school will never come to be because those who assess such students do not look beyond the student to the surrounding environs. Language minority families and children have always been the target of subjugation by the more dominant powers of mainstream society. This subjugation of one group by another who are more powerful in the political arena, the legal arena, and the educational arena leads to the disabling of language minority groups (Cummins, 1986).

Fradd and Wilen (1991) approach assessment from a different perspective. They assert that interpreters are

not trained and cognizant in the field of bilingual special education. Interpreters who are untrained will interpret and/or translate using their own perception or linguistic terminology. This can lead to misunderstanding by all parties involved and further complicate rather than clarify the assessment process.

Along with proper assessment procedures, teachers of limited English proficient students are unaware of appropriate intervention strategies to avoid having to initiate a referral that may be unwarranted. Cummins (1984) demonstrates that educators do not fully comprehend what constitutes language acquisition. Language for academic purposes takes longer for students to acquire than language for what Cummins (1984) labels BICS (Basic Interpersonal Conversational Skills). Educators who misinterpret basic communicative abilities of a LEP child as fluency to comprehend the language of school textbooks and teacher lessons are more apt to refer a student because such students appear intellectually inferior. The process of acquiring what Cummins (1984) labels CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) can take five to seven years whereas BICS can be attained in as quickly as two years for many language minority students.

Cummins (1984) asserts that educators fail to understand the significance of texts which are "cognitively demanding" or "context reduced." Such texts present

innumerable learning problems to those students who are in the process of acquiring a second language. Teachers' failure to utilize "context embedded" and "cognitively undemanding" (p. 142) texts with LEP youngsters prevents such youngsters from comprehension of material needed for class success. Thus many $L_2$ learners fail.

Cummins (1989) maintains that current educational systems persist in excluding the foreign culture/language and foreign born community from the school life, persist in advocating a mode of teaching which is one of "transmission" (p. 59) and not collaboration, and persist in practicing assessment which aims to find fault with the LEP youngster and not in the school policy. Practices such as these disempower students and families and lead to the inappropriate referral of these students to test for a suspected learning deficit when in reality there is none.

While the writer is not going to focus on underrepresentation of bilingual students in special education, Baca and Cervantes (1991) do caution educators that, at times, students who do elicit a handicap are not recognized as having this handicap, but instead are placed in bilingual programs since educators believe this is the correct placement. Again these educators fail to see the difference between deficit and diversity.

Duran (1991) speaks of the need to use "functional language," that is, language that reflects the language

students need to use in quotidian situations. Educators have not taken the time to create an "ecological inventory," i.e., to work with caregivers and other significant persons in the LEP child's life to uncover what vocabulary and structure in $L_1$ and $L_2$ this student must master. Furthermore, Duran (1991) asserts that exclusion of students' cultural diversity does not help such students to value their unique heritage.

Along with Cummins (1991, 1989, 1986, 1984), Duran (1991), Baca and Cervantes (1991), Garcia and Ortiz (1988), Cloud and Landurand (1991) demonstrate to educators how a disability, and not a linguistic difference or stage in language development, can affect the acquisition of a second language for the bilingual student. They discuss the effect of a disability on the process of acquiring a second language and that educators are not aware that a true disability does hinder language acquisition. Many educators do not have an overview of the various kinds of disabilities youngsters may bring to the language learning situation.

Hamayan and Damico (1991) express concern that students are referred for special testing due to cultural diversity and linguistic diversity and not genuine handicaps. Educators are reminded that $L_2$ learners acquire the second language as they are enmeshed in their unique cultural milieux as well as in their work in the classroom of the local school. School personnel fail to recognize that

culture, and all the facets of a student's life that the word encompasses, plays a significant role as the learner attempts to master the majority language. The differences between majority and minority cultures impact on the student's intrinsic motivation to perform and learn in the dominant culture. If there is a "mismatch" (p. 67), the effects on student learning can be disastrous. A "mismatch," the authors assert, causes misunderstandings on the part of the educator and the LEP student. These misunderstandings lead to erroneous assessment and explanations of assessment results. Therefore, students can be placed in improper educational settings or the "mismatch," per this writer, can lead to the student's shame for his/her cultural heritage with a decline in self-concept which negatively impacts school performance.

As long as high school personnel are not committed to the success of Latino youth and do not create the steps to success, the writer believes that Latino youth will continue to be mislabeled, misclassified, and denied access to educational opportunities for success. Lucas, Henze, and Donato (1990) write of absolution. They state that schools "absolve" themselves from educating youth who may be culturally or linguistically "deprived." Unfortunately, this absolution leads to programs that do not stress Latino culture and language; that fail to employ minority professionals as role models; and that exclude staff

development programs which can help teachers to learn new strategies, to respect cultural differences, and to understand current theories of second language acquisition. A variety of courses are not offered to Latino youth in high schools, and bilingual/multicultural counselors are not made part of the staff. Parent involvement is not given a high priority.

Collier and Hoover (1987), as do Cummins (1984) and Baca and Cervantes (1991), believe that students are mistakenly referred for specialized testing due to misinterpretations of cultural differences. Educators who lack knowledge of "sociocultural" diversity or the impact of acculturation on the LEP learner may, and often do, refer these students for special testing. Collier and Hoover (1987) maintain that even behaviors associated with the learning of a second language by $L_2$ learners are unfortunately determined to be handicaps by educators unfamiliar with theories of language ($L_2$) acquisition.

Another problem emanating from the writer's regional area and supported by the literature is prejudice. Prejudice disempowers families and destroys ethnic pride and heritage. Cloud (1991) strongly asserts that loss of ethnicity and decline in use of the maternal language by families who are victims of bias can result in student failure at school since no conceptual and experiential base is established in the maternal tongue. Therefore, LEP

students who have difficulties acquiring $L_2$ may become victims of unwarranted referrals.

Erikson (1963) believes that minorities are denied the development of "ego integrity," i.e., a healthy participation in society. The denial of who one is by biased individuals and the subjugation of certain cultural groups allow for the development of defensive behavior for survival by the dominated cultural group (Coles, 1967, 1977). This domination by the more powerful members of mainstream society (Cummins, 1986) leads to the disruption of family identity and student identity. Thus the LEP student robbed of a healthy self-concept fails to achieve in the mainstream class, and the teacher initiates the referral process unaware of/or choosing to deny the larger societal problems.

The writer is an active participant in national and state organization for bilingual educators and also helps to plan local and statewide conferences as a BETAC coordinator. Learnings acquired from attendance by the writer at professional presentations and conferences during the 1991-1992 academic school year also lend support to her review of the literature.

Dr. Else Hamayan, at an Educators' Conference sponsored by a neighboring BETAC in March of 1992, stated that educators will continue to fail minority students because partnerships are not formed between and among the various

professionals who impact on the education of language minority students. Since teamwork is not initiated to help an at risk LEP student (Garcia & Ortiz, 1988), these students will fail, and failure will eventually lead to referrals.

Nancy Cloud, in her presentation at the New York State Association of Bilingual Education's (SABE) annual statewide conference in April 1992, predicted that LEP students will be inaccurately referred for special testing and placement. Such students are not examined closely from various perspectives and by trained multicultural bilingual personnel.

Yates (1989) maintains that educators who do not account for changes in the makeup of student populations due to demographic changes fail these students because such educators do not adjust to the linguistic and cultural diversity these students bring to the classrooms. Many educators, he maintains, do not receive training in ESL methodologies, bilingual education, and the language acquisition process.

Educators do not understand the complexities of the assessment process (Cloud, 1991). As previously stressed by the writer, $L_2$ students are inappropriately assessed by the Anglo majority (Cummins, 1986, 1989; Hamayan & Damico, 1991). Thus improper assessment is a causal factor resulting in placement of linguistic and culturally diverse

students in handicap classes. Diversity is mistakenly assessed as a deficit (Collier & Hoover, 1987).

Another causal factor in the misdiagnosis and placement of minorities in classes for the handicapped (Garcia & Yates, 1986) is the lack of trained multicultural bilingual personnel. Such personnel are difficult to find, and schools will use native speakers of a language, licensed in areas other than ESL, bilingual education, or bilingual special education, to teach these students.

An educator untrained in the discipline he/she is teaching can make errors detrimental to the educational success of many students. A teacher who does not understand the difference between linguistic diversity and linguistic deficit can be a liability in lieu of an asset for the struggling second language learner (Garcia & Yates, 1986).

A significant causal factor of inappropriate referrals is the biases and/or prejudices which ostracize minority parents and prevent them from becoming active partners in their children's education. Parents have much information about their children that can help educators create the proper environment for the learner. If educators are deprived of this information because minority parents are afraid to enter the school doors, the LEP youngster may be erroneously referred to the CSE and wrongly placed in a special class. Language minority parents are often deprived of their right to ask questions or to due process if a

referral is initiated (Cummins, 1984, 1986, 1989; Carrasquillo, 1986; Baca & Cervantes, 1989).

A primary causal factor of inappropriate referrals is teachers' lack of knowledge of instructional interventions, i.e., prereferral strategies. The majority of school personnel working with LEP students have not been taught prereferral strategies in order to work successfully with all students, including the LEP student and the bilingual/bicultural student. Evidence of professionals not knowing these strategies/interventions is presented throughout this chapter and in the literature review as aptly reflected in the works of Cummins (1986, 1989), Garcia and Ortiz (1988), Baca and Cervantes (1989), and Hamayan and Damico (1991).

The various topical areas covered by the writer thus far include the following: theories of second language acquisition, assessment, prereferral strategies, bias, and parenting. The writer's work includes the fields of education, psychology, sociology, and bilingual education, which encompass linguistics, psycholinguistics, and cultural pluralism.

The following chapters illustrate what the writer was planning and did accomplish in her catchment area. She planned not to fail the bilingual community who has come to trust in the BETAC office of which she is coordinator. She had already created a partnership, a trusting partnership

between the BETAC office and the Hispanic community.

# CHAPTER III

## ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

The following goals and expected outcomes were projected for this project.

### Goals

The goal of the practicum for the writer is that limited English proficient students are not going to be inappropriately referred to the Committee on Special Education for testing and probable placement in settings for handicapped students.

### Expected Outcomes

1. The writer intends to involve mainstream teachers, ESL teachers, special educators, and other support personnel to achieve her goal. As a result of intervention strategies that will be part of an inservice training course, such teachers are going to develop a repertoire of prereferral strategies. They will also be able to utilize those learned prereferral strategies to prevent an inaccurate judgement and inappropriate referral to the CSE. The results will be that the teachers involved in this training are going to become more cognizant and trusting in making knowledgeable

and well informed judgements about a LEP student who appears to have a deficit. They will more readily be able to distinguish what constitutes a deficit from what constitutes the processes of acquiring a second language.

2. The teachers in the writer's service area, i.e., mainstream teachers, ESL teachers, special education teachers, and support personnel will begin to develop ability in Spanish as a result of a training course in that language. Through the use of simple Spanish phrases, teachers will be able to make LEP students and parents feel welcome in class and the school setting.

3. The educators in the writer's catchment area and other educators statewide will have a source of prereferral strategies as a result of the writer publishing a booklet on this topic.

4. The writer also intends to include Hispanic parents to accomplish her goal. Hispanic parents are the largest minority group with the most LEP students inappropriately referred. The writer intends to involve Hispanic parents in school activities through a program designed by her. Such program will address parents' concern in the total educational and communal experiences for their students and themselves.

Measurement of Outcomes

1. Mainstream teachers, ESL teachers, special educators, and other support personnel who were going to participate in the writer's inservice training would demonstrate increased abilities to differentiate between a suspected handicap and a linguistic, cultural, or socioeconomic diversity. Participants were going to be asked to complete answers to questionnaires that would indicate a measure of success in their abilities in distinguishing diversity from deficit. The writer would be satisfied that a level of success had been reached if 15 participants enrolled in the inservice training, and if 12 out of these 15 enrolled participants felt comfortable in referring a LEP student and/or deciding to withhold such referral.

Questionnaires to measure success were, for example, going to contain approximately 70 items. The writer hoped that a projected 12 out of 15 course applicants would respond positively to 40 out of these 70 items. These items were going to be described statistically by a histogram (see Appendix F).

2. Success in the use of Spanish for basic communications was going to be measured by participants' oral responses to items presented by the instructor of this training. If 10 items were presented, the writer would measure success in very basic communication by correct

answers to 8 out of 10 oral items by participants, and again results were going to be described statistically by a histogram (see Appendix F).

3. The success of the writer's booklet on prereferral strategies was going to be measured by answers to questions (using a Likert scale) at the end of the booklet. Such questions would seek to determine the usefulness of the booklet by inservice course participants and other educators, and such success would be shown in the final report by a table (see Appendix L).

4. The writer's program designed to involve Hispanic parents was going to be measured through the simple task of maintaining attendance records for each program meeting. Attendance sign-up sheets at such program meetings would meet the specifications for success by the writer if they indicated that not less than 20 Hispanic parents had attended a session. This attendance by 20 or more parents was going to demonstrate that such parents were interested in becoming more fully involved in the educational experiences of their children. Success in maintaining 20 or more parent attendees at such meetings would be shown in the maintenance of accurate attendance records (see Appendix E).

In sum, the writer was going to measure success of her outcomes by descriptive statistics. Figures and tables would be used to demonstrate the success of this project.

# CHAPTER IV

# SOLUTION STRATEGY

## Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

The problem that the writer was keenly aware of concerned the inappropriate referral of limited English proficient students to the Committee on Special Education for testing and probable placement in settings for the handicapped student. Evidence in the writer's work setting and evidence from the literature have already been presented. The writer now wishes to focus on solutions to the problem provided by the literature.

The literature review presented as solutions in this chapter covers a wide array of topics such as: students' self-esteem, theories of second language acquisition, alternative assessment practices, parental involvement, LEP students' cultural and linguistic diversity, cooperative learning, whole language, process writing, and lastly, solutions drawn from the writer's first practicum (Christina, 1992).

Cummins (1984, 1986, 1989, 1991) introduces his theoretical framework for what he terms "empowerment" of minority students. For Cummins, this "empowerment" occurs in the classroom when the teacher actively incorporates

minority cultures and languages in the classroom environment; when the teacher becomes a facilitator in the learning process; when language minority parents feel welcome in the school; and when assessment processes do not always look for the problem in the child. This framework, if incorporated by educators and administrators, will raise LEP students' self-confidence. The writer has already asserted that increased self-esteem for the $L_2$ learner enables this learner to strive to be all he/she can be and thus can prevent an inappropriate referral since learning difficulties will dissipate easily in the type of setting Cummins envisions. Those problems, which are more of a deficit than a difference, will become apparent to educators who welcome the cultural and linguistic diversity of $L_1$ speakers as they struggle to master $L_2$. These educators will create an environment that encourages collaboration, risk taking, and the uniqueness of each child. Cummins presents many practical strategies to prevent the inappropriate referral of minority language children, and it is these strategies gleaned from his works that the writer weaves into her solution strategies.

Willig and Greenberg (1986) have compiled a work on bilingual education and learning disabilities which allowed the writer, upon careful reading of selected chapters, to discern useful strategies for the prevention of unwarranted referrals to the CSE. Their book is the result of

contributions by many professionals in bilingual/ESL education, special education, and bilingual/ESL special education. Ambert (1986), in Chapter 2, speaks of assessment of language disorders, as do Cloud (1991) and Hamayan and Damico (1991). Ambert (1986) stresses that a linguistic deficit, to be a true deficit, is present in both languages. Therefore, educators must be cognizant of how the native language is spoken. This information may be obtained if cooperation by the parents is facilitated as advocated by Cummins (1986). Parents can be the ones to best describe how their child learned the native language and how they are using the language. The writer's SED, Division of Bilingual Education, in a 1990 official publication, recommends a bilingual multidisciplinary assessment team to accurately diagnose a deficit or discern a diversity.

Ortiz and Maldonado-Colon (1986, p. 38) write of "alternative explanations" to explain what may seem to be a deficit when in reality the student is struggling to acquire the language. Carrasquillo, in Chapter 4 of Willig and Greenberg (1986), cautions teachers to remember that language is learned when it is based on previous learner experience and has a contextual significance for the learner. Therefore, educators must be careful to avoid meaningless drill which leaves the student waiting for the cue from the teacher in order to respond. In other words,

the teacher becomes the transmitter of knowledge, and the child passively accepts the situation. Cummins (1984, 1986) indicated how this transmission model can lead to a "learned helplessness" which disables students and leads educators to falsely initiate the referral process.

Methodologies, such as cooperative learning (Kagan, 1992; Hill & Hill, 1990; Johnson, Johnson, Holubee, & Roy, 1984), process writing (Five, 1992; Nathan, Temple, Juntunen, & Temple, 1986), whole language (Taylor, 1989), and portfolio assessment (Belanoff & Dickson, 1991) are used by educators in many classrooms. Educators must begin to incorporate these methodologies in lessons that involve $L_2$ learners. The LEP student can learn much more in an environment of cooperation and mutual acceptance by teachers and peers. This ambiance can help teachers to avoid confusing a diversity with a deficit.

The writer has used process writing as a former ESL teacher and she can attest to its success. Her students grew to love writing, proudly illustrated and displayed their works, and some were even chosen to be writer of the month by the parent teacher association (PTA).

One of the writer's colleagues received professional training in cooperative learning from John Hopkins University and has trained ESL teachers and mainstream teachers on how to successfully use cooperative learning strategies in all types of classrooms. Spencer Kagar, at

the National Association of Bilingual Education's winter 1992 convention, offered a two hour training session on cooperative learning to bilingual educators nationwide.

Portfolio assessment seems to work well with LEP students. A BETAC office situated in another region of the writer's state has done training statewide on how to use portfolio assessment with LEP students.

Therefore, cooperative learning, process writing, and portfolio assessment, while applicable to most students, are certainly strategies to be used to provide success with the academic endeavors of linguistically and culturally diverse learners. Cooperative learning raises self-esteem and provides mutual acceptance by peers as it facilitates language learning; process writing increases students' abilities with the spoken and written word and fosters an attitude of positive belief in oneself; and finally, portfolio assessment as an alternative to traditional assessment provides educators with a wide display of students' works with which to help such educators to formulate a more knowledgeable and confident decision on student ability.

Use of appropriate assessment instruments is addressed by Hamayan and Damico (1991) in their text on the issue of bias in the assessment of LEP students. Testing instruments are biased in the fact that they may be culturally and linguistically inappropriate for the proper assessment of

LEP students. In Chapter 2 of their work, Hamayan and Damico stress the importance of understanding how children acquire language. Educators who are cognizant of theories of second language acquisition and the "effects of cultural diversity" (p. 67) on acquiring the new language are less apt to refer a student for what seems to be a deficit but in reality is a difference.

Assessment of LEP students is further clarified by Cloud (1991). Dr. Cloud, at her plenary address at the State Association of Bilingual Education (SABE) conference in March 1992, outlined practical prereferral strategies educators can implement to prevent unnecessary and unwarranted referral. Dr. Cloud stated to her audience that she believes in a holistic/ecological assessment. LEP children's current academic performance/setting must be examined, as well as their past schooling, physical and emotional well being, family mobility, post traumatic experiences, level of economic security, and fluency in $L_1$ and $L_2$ by the family and the child. Such variables do impact on a child's performance in his/her new country. Cloud (1991) presents several questionnaires in Chapter 6 in the work of Hamayan and Damico (1991) that educators would be wise to consult either as prereferral strategies or as a way to gather the requisite information if the teacher genuinely believes the referral is necessary.

Landurand and Cloud (1991) speak of a "climate" for

second language acquisition. This "climate" would facilitate learning by creating a "low anxiety" ambiance that would permit the LEP student to acquire self-esteem and motivation to succeed in the second language. Motivation prevents students from becoming at risk and can reduce the number of inappropriate referrals as educators strive to keep the motivation and joy of learning a second language alive in their classrooms.

Chamot and O'Malley (1986) take a different approach to the prevention of inappropriate referrals. They posit that the teaching of learning strategies to LEP youngsters can help these youngsters to function optimally in the mainstream classroom.

The importance of parental involvement is advocated by the writer's SED, Division of Bilingual Education (The University of the State of New York, 1990), and by Garbarino (1982) and Fradd (1992). Parents who are involved in decisions about their children's educational program can ward off unwarranted referrals. The writer's SED urges BETACs to host one annual parental seminar in the native language of the majority of LEP parents to encourage them to become involved and aware of all school programs and decisions that impact on their child's education.

Garcia and Ortiz (1988) and Ortiz and Garcia (1989) present one of the most comprehensive systems of prereferral strategies the writer has read to date. Their step by step

process is graphically shown in a figure which leads interested educators through what they term "A Prereferral Process."

Garcia and Ortiz (1988) strongly recommend a team approach when it appears that a LEP student may have a handicap. This team of classroom teachers must be schooled in the dynamics of their particular school population and must be cognizant of what makes a teacher effective.

The team serves as an advisor to the teacher with the child who seems to exhibit a problem. The model presented in Garcia and Ortiz's works consists of alternate interventions in the student's academic life; examinations of the curriculum, the classroom teacher's strategies/methods of instruction; use of parents as sources of information regarding their child, i.e., the student in question; and even appraisal of the student him/herself, i.e., the background of experiences or lack of experiences he/she can bring to the learning situation.

The model presented by Garcia and Ortiz (1988) and their 1989 article on prereferral strategies do provide educators with a way that seems cost effective and easy to facilitate with building colleagues. The writer urges her readers to obtain their own copies of these articles since Garcia and Ortiz (1988) and Ortiz and Garcia (1989) seem to be very comprehensive in their discussion of prereferral strategies.

Baca and Cervantes (1989), Baca (1991), Baca and Almanza (1991), Cummins (1991), and Maya and Fradd (1990) give to their readers a wide array of training materials that a teacher trainer can implement in a course on intervention strategies to prevent unwarranted referrals. Baca and Cervantes (1989) label their work "a resource for teacher trainers" (p. v), and this writer is pleased with the abundance of practical prereferral strategies presented by them. They supply abundant information to their readers on the "needs" of bilingual youngsters and bilingual exceptional youngsters. Understanding the difference between the two can help to avoid the unnecessary referrals.

Baca and Cervantes (1991) present a lengthy work consisting of twelve chapters so that educators can choose those that fit their particular need. Assessment of the bilingual child is discussed in chapter 7 by R. M. Pagan. This assessment focuses on language proficiency and language screening. This writer, i.e., the Nova University student, maintains that knowing the child's language preference can help a teacher to assist the child to make the transition from $L_1$ to $L_2$ if $L_1$ is the preferred and more dominant language.

Collier (1989) talks of teacher competencies in mainstreaming bilingual and/or bilingual special education students. These competencies can be used as prereferral strategies, e.g., mainstream teachers can become more

culturally sensitive and "flexible" (p. 288) in their methodologies through staff development. This flexibility and sensitivity to language minority children can ward off the unnecessary referral and lend validation to the more justifiable one.

Baca and Almanza (1991) recommend many of the strategies the writer has already listed. Approaches such as cooperative learning, whole language, maintaining a journal, language experience charts, and other approaches that maximize learning for students are presented in this CEC publication. The writer has found that with the demands of a career, a home, and a student life, she is motivated to read well planned, well written, concise materials on a subject. The authors of this work establish their point and do it well.

Maya and Fradd (1990) describe a comprehensive language assessment that educators can use to more accurately pinpoint diversity or deficit. Their work presents step by step instructions and work sheets educators can use in assessing a student to decide if a referral is even warranted. A plan such as Maya and Fradd's (1990) could be used by the teams Garcia and Ortiz (1988) recommend as one set of guidelines for an accurate prereferral assessment before any real concern for a referral is initiated.

In keeping with the writer's goal of preventing inappropriate referrals of language minority students, Omark

and Erickson's (1983) conceptualizations of what is the bilingual exceptional child versus their conceptualizations of what is the LEP child in the process of acquiring a second language, demystify for educators the difference between language disorder/deficit versus language difference/diversity.

The writer's first practicum (Christina, 1992) presented a short training course for mainstream teachers of LEP students. The goal was to help these teachers maximize the teaching situation with newly arrived LEP youngsters. Some of the strategies taught in that course certainly are applicable as strategies to prevent inappropriate referrals. Thus the writer references once again Underwood (1987), Law and Eckes (1990), Maculaitis-Cooke and Scheraga (1988), Sion (Ed.) (1991), and Simpson and Meister (1991). These authors present day to day activities, instructional strategies, sample lesson plans, context embedded language activities, and parental activities that ESL teachers, mainstream teachers, special educators, and support personnel can use to facilitate the minority language learner's success in various school settings.

Provenzano (1985) and Hamayan and Perlman (1990), also referenced by the writer in Practicum I (Christina, 1992), present a rich array of teaching strategies that can prevent unwarranted referrals if educators adopt such strategies. These authors demonstrate classroom management teaching

procedures that all educators can employ to promote the success of language minority students.

The writer has presented a wide spectrum of solutions gleaned from the literature. To further expound on each one is unnecessary at this point. However, readers who wish to implement the worthy features of this practicum would be wise to include the works of these authors in their professional libraries.

The readings accomplished by the writer are numerous but important to the project's success. The following paragraphs are going to present ideas generated by the writer. The writer claims no original spark of genius for these ideas since they are the result of professional readings and high interest in the field of bilingual education and bilingual special education.

As previously stated, strategies from the writer's first practicum (Christina, 1992), while designed for the mainstream teacher with non-English speaking (NES) or limited English proficient (LEP) students enrolled, could also be applied as prereferral strategies. The writer's training consisted of classroom management techniques, such as where to seat the newly arrived NES student to facilitate optimal learning conditions, how to simplify the language of a lesson but not the content or concept being taught, how to use songs, poetry, and rhymes to facilitate language acquisition, how cooperative learning teams help the LEP

student or any reticent student, and lastly why a realia rich environment was important. These strategies can create a stimulating and literate environment. Besides the courses of action presented in Practicum I, the writer intended to encourage educators to implement many others.

First, it was going to be necessary for educators to understand that classrooms abundant in manipulatives--classrooms with a play area, a listening corner, and a small library--facilitate learning by all students, especially the LEP child who may need the extra time to explore the various "corners" or "areas" in order to acquire language.

Second, it was going to be a priority that educators rethink traditional assessment processes, especially when working with LEP students. Creating a portfolio that demonstrates the growth of a non English speaking student, in lieu of asking that student to pass the regular class exams, wards off failure and grades the student on his/her growth. A portfolio in most subject areas can substantiate that the student is trying to make slow, but steady progress. This was going to be a strong prereferral strategy in the writer's opinion. Even as a foreign language teacher, she always kept samples of students' work to justify progress or lack of such progress to CSE members, parents, or other school personnel.

Third, it was going to be important that educators understand that LEP students may come to this country

without the experiences of their American counterparts. Thus the writer would demonstrate that varied experiences have to be incorporated into daily lessons in order to bridge the gap between what the student knew and needed to know. The writer felt strongly that not only were some LEP students devoid of a rich conceptual base from the home environment, but that many other non-LEP students, due to life circumstances, were living lives empty of experiences by which to grow and learn. The writer's prereferral strategies were going to be seen by many educators as strategies, not only to prevent inappropriate referral of LEP students, but also of many other students who could speak English but were also deprived of the rich cultural and linguistic experiences in our American way of life.

Fourth, it was going to be essential that educators understand that many LEP youngsters did not understand the American school culture. Demonstrating typical school behaviors was going to prevent such students from making inappropriate faux pas which could have been mistaken for signs of potential deficits and not differences. Educators needed to understand the foreign behavior patterns and cultural mores of students, as well as thoughtfully presenting to them the typical Anglo/American customs and school behaviors.

Fifth, it was going to be imperative that educators were made cognizant of the fact that not all LEP students

were here as exchange students or for parental job requirements or such other advantageous causes. Many LEP students had left war torn countries and were going through a rough period of adjusting to a new culture not freely chosen by their family. The behaviors exhibited by these youngsters could have caused them to be referred for special testing when in reality some counseling and tender loving care by the teachers were needed.

The writer had experienced this phenomenon as a former ESL teacher. One young student was quite belligerent and seemed to be out of sync in the first grade in which he was placed. During a fire drill, the student revealed nervously to the writer that he felt as if he were in his own country and the bombs were about to fall and explode. This revelation changed the writer's attitude towards this student as well as others who worked with him once they were informed about his experiences. The result was that this youngster grew to be loved by his teachers and classmates and thus came to display a high level of intelligence. The change did not come easily for the student and involved teachers, but it did come.

Sixth, it would be requisite for educators to understand that while special education classes are smaller than the mainstream classes, these classes are not the solution for a student whose only diversity is with the language. A linguistic diversity is not a handicap and

requires a developmental program. Inappropriately placing such students, believing it will do more good than harm, only causes the opposite reaction. Students perceive themselves as helpless if placed in a class where some students truly have a handicap. Unfortunately they assume a handicap that they do not possess. Why give them one when none exists and why have that LEP student take the place in a special class that a student with a true handicap may need.

Seventh, it would be important that educators understand that lack of formal schooling does not constitute a handicap. With collaboration among specialists, the mainstream teachers and the ESL teacher, a program could be worked out to help students fill the chasm in their formal learning experiences.

Eighth, it was going to be vital that educators know that interpreters are available, but such educators would have to learn to be cautious in their choice of who interprets. Use of translators and interpreters sensitive to the needs of LEP students can facilitate educators' understanding of a LEP student's past schooling, family history, interests, problems, and overall past and present experiences. Most of us who speak another language can translate, but translation for a specific purpose requires some work/consultation with the translator by the concerned parties before any planned meeting. Misunderstandings can

result if the translator walks in "cold." Such a translator may be totally foreign to the experience in which he/she must play the crucial role of translator. These misunderstandings, in turn, can lead educators to believe the problem lies within the student and not with the translator.

Ninth, it was going to be critical that educators rely on parents of LEP or NES students. These caregivers could validate their children's strengths and weaknesses. Problems in how students speak the native language are crucial to the educator trying to decide between linguistic difference or deficit. Parents can provide a biographical sketch of their youngsters, which can aid in the initial, informal assessment all teachers make of their students. This biographical sketch can be invaluable if the teacher feels an assessment is warranted and initiates the referral process.

Lastly, it was going to be crucial that educators realize that non-English speaking students could also be gifted. Lack of the mainstream language and culture should not be equated with less than normal intelligence or lack of special talent/abilities. The writer was not going to focus on the gifted LEP students in this practicum, but she did wish to make educators aware that there are gifted students among the potential speakers of the English language.

This section has touched on solutions the writer had

learned through experiences as a student herself in a foreign culture, as a foreign language teacher, as an ESL teacher, as an elected officer in professional organizations, as an avid reader of professional literature, as an active professional conference attendee and presenter, and lastly as an administrator of a Bilingual Education Technical Assistance Center. These experiences were to be made a part of the writer's solution in order to avoid unwarranted referrals of LEP students for special testing and probable inappropriate placements in classes for the handicapped student.

The writer devotes the next section to her solution strategies. These strategies are going to be accurately explained so that her readers can emulate such solutions.

## Description of Selected Solution

Due to careful review of the literature already presented throughout the proposal and due to the writer's training and experience, she was prepared to try the following:

a. Educators would be offered an inservice course which was going to cover topics gleaned from the readings already cited, and based on the needs presented as evidence of the problem in Chapter II. The writer is going to elaborate more on the course as she presents her steps for implementation. However, this course would draw on the

works of those prominent leaders in the field of bilingual education and bilingual special education. For example, the works of Hamayan and Damico (1991), Cloud (1988, 1991), Cummins (1984), Baca (1991), and Baca and Cervantes (1989) were going to be the writer's basic texts to cover areas such as assessment, language acquisition, cultural diversity, and prereferral strategies. The Council for Exceptional Children (1989) has published a flyer file on culturally and linguistically diverse exceptional children, and this file was going to be made available to course participants for topics on assessment, curriculum and instruction, and parent involvement. These short excerpts/articles are easy to read, inexpensive to purchase, and present innumerable creative strategies to prevent unwarranted referrals. Other topics, such as portfolio assessment (Belanoff & Dickson, Eds., 1991), whole language (Taylor, 1989), process writing (Five, 1992), and collaborative learning (Kagan, 1992) were going to be made a part of the writer's designed inservice training to prevent inappropriate referrals of language minority students. Strategies from the writer's first practicum (Christina, 1992) were going to serve equally well as prereferral strategies. Such strategies have already been referred to in the literature review of this practicum.

This inservice course was going to be the best method possible for addressing the problem of unwarranted referrals

of language minority students. The writer had access to some of the best teacher trainers in her state through her networks with other administrators and professional organizations.

The inservice training was going to be sponsored by the teachers' center, and the mailings from that center, as well as the writer's office, would reach a large number of educators in the writer's catchment area.

Furthermore, due to the kinds of technical assistance provided through the BETAC office, the idea of offering an inservice course to all educators was the idea that seemed most feasible in meeting practicum outcomes designed by the writer. Most educators in the BOCES I catchment area had daily contact with LEP students and it seemed to the writer that such educators would welcome a training course of the kind she designed. Furthermore, the offering of an inservice credit would help many teachers advance on the salary scale.

b. The writer would bring language minority parents together several times during the practicum implementation. Parents needed to know what was happening in their local schools, and to do this they had to begin to form partnerships with their children's teachers. An informed parent and working teacher/parent team could prevent inappropriate placements or program decisions for LEP students.

Bringing parents together is not always easy, but the writer planned to use the local church, since parents seemed to have established a microsystem relationship between themselves and the Hispanic clergy (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Prominent Hispanic community leaders were also going to help the writer to "spread the word" when a parental seminar was sponsored by the writer's office.

Since the BETAC staff had also maintained contact with the large Hispanic community in their area, the writer/coordinator was confident that the parents would attend BOCES I BETAC functions. The leaders in the Hispanic community also spoke highly of all BOCES programs since the BOCES adult education coordinator and BETAC office had created bilingual vocational courses to meet specific needs requested by the community. BETAC also had established a working relationship with the community via other projects. Such projects included, but were not limited to, the following: a clothing drive, a local and statewide conference for Hispanic youth, a local and statewide spelling bee for the elementary Hispanic students, parental workshops, and various activities for Spanish Heritage Week/Month.

Thus the groundwork was already in place which would allow the writer to bring Hispanic parents together more often than in the past and for the very specific purpose of creating bonds between school, parent, and community. This

creation of bonds would lessen unnecessary referrals of LEP students since who better than parents could explain their children's behavioral patterns to their teachers.

c. The writer would offer a Spanish language course to educators and other professionals in her catchment area. This course would be designed to allow participants to achieve minimal fluency in Spanish so as to be able to use the language with the large numbers of Hispanic youngsters enrolled in ESL classes and mainstream classes in the writer's school districts of BOCES I. Teacher demonstrations of understanding the LEP student's language and culture (Collier & Hoover, 1987) could only help to raise such students' self-esteem and potential to learn and possibly ward off unnecessary testing and referral.

The design of a Spanish course for professionals who work with LEP students had long been in demand. This course was going to be successful since the writer had been receiving requests since spring of 1992 for such a course. It would be easy to implement since the writer and her assistant speak the language and could easily teach the course. Again the enticement of inservice credit was going to be offered to the teachers, but the writer felt that due to popular demand, the credit would not be a determining factor in course success.

d. The writer was going to work closely with professional organizations, such as NABE (National

Association of Bilingual Education), CEC (Council for Exceptional Children), and NYSTESOL (New York State Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages). She hoped these organizations could help in the dissemination of materials she was going to put together for her inservice participants and other educators statewide.

Professional organizations are always looking for written materials on topics of interest to their members. The literature review has shown this area to be of special interest to educators nationwide. Thus the writer hoped that a well written booklet by herself on prereferral strategies would be more easily disseminated through the sponsorship of a professional organization. Furthermore, she has always assumed leadership roles in professional organizations. Therefore, she already had an established network within such organizations.

The writer also hoped be able to present her practicum at a statewide or at a national organization's professional conference. She is currently an active member of NYSTESOL, NABE and its state parent affiliate SABE, and the national and international Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

e. The writer knew she would face the difficult task of working with educators whose ingrained attitudes hamper the progress of LEP students. These educators are under the false belief that special education placements actually

benefit the LEP student due to class size. They do not conceive of ESL as a developmental program and are unaware that bilingual education and/or ESL are programs mandated by the SED under Part 54 of the Commissioner's Regulations (The University of the State of New York, 1990).

These educators do not see the real need for setting aside instructional time in ESL for LEP students (Chamot & O'Malley, 1986) nor do they understand why preservation of the maternal language is so important (Cummins, 1984; Hamayan & Damico, 1991; Baca, 1991).

In sum, the writer's task was going to be to propose solutions that were practical, cost effective, easy to implement, and not out of touch with what educators could do.

This project would experience success due to the following factors:

a. Educators had indicated that they were unaware of the New York State guidelines for students who are limited in English and may have special needs. They wished to learn such guidelines.

b. Administrators and educators indicated that there was a need for intervention strategies since referral was too easily opted for in many cases with LEP students. These referrals were usually unnecessary and penalized the academic success of LEP students when they resulted in improper class placements.

c. The BETAC of which the writer is coordinator was and is still known widely in her catchment area. BETACs were created by SED in the mid 1980s to provide technical assistance to districts with LEP enrollment. The BETAC staff was and is still widely respected by local educational agencies (LEAs) for their expertise with bilingual education and their extensive outreach work in the bilingual community.

d. The BETAC office, through the grant and through other funding sources, could offer inservice courses for credit with no charge to participants.

e. The language minority community was already working with the BETAC office and had built a trusting relationship with the writer and her staff.

f. The writer has an assistant, a bilingual resource specialist, who understood the culture of the students and their families in the BETAC catchment area.

g. The BETAC office has always maintained a resource library for use by all school personnel and had monies to extend the selection of materials in the field of bilingual special education.

h. The BETAC office could provide bilingual/bicultural professionals to insure proper assessment when such assessment appeared warranted.

i. The BETAC office staff interpreted and/or translated for districts or found personnel to do so in

order that parents and others could access monolingual school personnel.

j. The writer/coordinator and the resource specialist are bilingual.

k. The secretary works hard to disseminate course announcements and other pertinent material in the field of bilingual education.

l. The BETAC office is supported in its efforts to fulfill its responsibilities by the BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services) in which it is housed and the state education department.

In sum, BETAC had the necessary resources to accomplish the tasks outlined in the practicum proposal, and furthermore, the willingness and leadership of the writer of this proposal would allow its success.

The writer planned the following steps for successful implementation:

a. The writer designed an inservice course as an intervention to prevent inappropriate referrals of language minority students for special testing and probable placement in handicapped classes when in reality no deficit exists. Evidence presented indicated that educators did not know such prereferral strategies, and the literature previously cited is abundant with strategies to ameliorate the education of language minority students.

This inservice training was going to be geared for the

ESL teacher, special educator, mainstream teacher, and other support personnel whose work impacted on the education of LEP students.

The training sessions of the writer's course would include, but not be limited to, the following: theories of language acquisition; assessment; process writing and portfolio assessment; collaborative learning and literacy development through whole language; classroom management techniques for school personnel who worked daily with LEP students; orientation strategies for LEP students which would include unique features of American schools and culture; methods that built upon the experiential base of LEP students so that new learning experiences could easily be incorporated into the students' daily learnings; skills such as semantic mapping and other learning strategies that supported the acquisition of higher order thinking abilities. These cited strategies were to be part of the writer's coursework. The writer would refer to the Guidelines for Services to Students With Limited English Proficiency and Special Education in New York State (The University of the State of New York, 1990) in order to cover all state regulations in this area. Literature previously cited would help the writer build a solid foundation for this course.

Educators who chose to enroll in the training were also going to learn the design of ESL/bilingual education

programs, the referral process that is necessary for special education, and the regulations pertaining to Part 154 and Part 200 of the writer's SED (The University of the State of New York, 1990). Other topics the writer deemed necessary were to be added based on the participants' request or course need.

The writer planned to stay in touch with all course participants until the project's termination. This was going to be accomplished by the offer of technical assistance, on-site workshops, mailings, and other avenues by which the writer could access these educators if such educators were actively concerned with reducing the number of inappropriate referrals. She expected that at least all educators who profited from the training would be able to document that they were more sensitive to the cultural and linguistic diversity of LEP students and were learning to carefully distinguish diversity from deficit.

The inservice course was going to be offered for one credit through the locally funded teachers' center in the BOCES I catchment area. The teachers' center does an extensive mailing of their course offerings, and the writer was assured of adequate dissemination of her course by the center. The BETAC office staff would further increase course announcements through mailings to districts not covered by the teachers' center, through announcements in local publications, through the BOCES public relations

office, and through extensive outreach in the field. The outreach was to be accomplished by the BETAC staff, BETAC Advisory Council, and BOCES outreach workers. The writer planned to distribute flyers at all meetings to which she was invited. The extensive publicity for this course was necessary so that all educators in the BOCES I rural regional area would have been contacted.

b. The writer, at the end of the inservice training, planned to publish a booklet which would feature the main tenets of the training. This booklet was to be a resource for those who would have taken the course. It was planned to be a handy set of strategies/guidelines to keep educators aware that LEP students could be inappropriately referred if strategies learned were not put into operation by course attendees.

The writer intended to disseminate this booklet statewide so that other educators could have a resource available for prereferral strategies. Hopefully these educators would then seek out further studies or literature in the field of bilingual education and bilingual special education in order that language minority students would not be quickly misdiagnosed as having a learning deficit by the classroom teacher and thus referred to the CSE.

c. The writer was also going to design and offer a conversational Spanish course for the classroom teacher, the ESL teacher, and other school personnel and professionals to

enable them to use the students' language for minimal, but necessary, communication. The ultimate aim of this course was to aid Hispanic students. These students, who were the majority of LEP students in the BETAC catchment area, would begin to feel at ease in the class setting if the teachers were able to use their language for simple communication. If the $L_2$ student was able to be put at ease, he/she would be able to learn more easily.

The writer, time permitting, prepared to incorporate some cultural insights on the Hispanic lifestyle into the course. Cultural sensitivity is so necessary in understanding the behaviors of children from other countries. Behaviors which are culturally ingrained in the students' lifestyles can be mistaken for deficits and not diversities by those whose culture is so vastly different.

d. The writer intended to also offer an Hispanic parent program. The program was going to provide knowledge to the parents in their own language. Such knowledge would include the importance of establishing a network with school personnel; understanding the American school system and the organization of the local school system; the rights and responsibilities of parenting; knowledge of the ESL program and students' rights of access to all other school programs; the comprehension of rights accorded to parents if a referral to the CSE was initiated by school personnel; and the reasons for creating a proper home environment allowing

for the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development of their children. Parents needed to know that what they do as parents is crucial to the success of their children at school. Unwarranted referrals by educators can be aborted if parents realize that they are key players in their children's path to academic success.

The writer proposed to involve bilingual speakers who would be able to help parents become the liaison between home and school for their children's academic success. The bilingual speakers the writer intended to use were: a school superintendent, an ESL teacher, a guidance counselor, a social worker, a psychotherapist, a nurse, a lawyer, and other bilingual experts who could have provided additional information to these people.

e. Consultants with expertise in various fields were going to be contracted to help teach the inservice course. This proposal was planned to be shared with them at an orientation session in order that these experts would be able to teach the various sections of the inservice training per the writer's proposal. The consultants were to be carefully chosen by the writer so that course content would have significance for course participants.

The writer's cabinet level supervisor would be kept abreast of all phases of this project. She is an innovative individual and has always supported the writer's attempts to deliver quality services to her component school districts

and communities.

The writer has an established BETAC Advisory Council and they too were to be informed of the proposal so as to facilitate implementation. Council members are from various schools; therefore, they were in a position to disseminate announcements for courses and parent activities.

f. The writer resolved to continue her readings in the fields of bilingual education and bilingual special education to insure that adequate, up to date knowledge would be presented to educators. All professional conference announcements and/or workshops were to be mailed continuously to the school districts.

The writer intended to add new reference materials cited in this practicum to the BETAC library.

The writer and her assistant aimed to make earnest attempts to continue to attend professional meetings in this field in order to consult with experts.

g. A daily log, which is required for evaluation of the BETAC grant, would be maintained.

In sum, the steps presented reflected the writer's planning approach to avoid the inappropriate referral of language minority students to the CSE and the erroneous, but probable, placement in a class for handicapped students.

## Report of Action Taken

The writer fully intended to follow an action plan with

an established time line for practicum implementation. The calendar the writer followed is described in the paragraphs that follow. All plans were maintained in the requisite BETAC log, monthly summaries, and reports of technical assistance.

Week One:

The writer had the opportunity to hear Dr. Leonard Baca speak at Fordham University as this month began. He spoke of school reform and how minority students, language minority students, and language minority handicapped students are usually overlooked in school reform. He presented a list of strategies to his audience to help these educators succeed in the mainstream with these youngsters. Dr. Baca stated that teachers had to be prepared to deal with the cultural diversity now entering into their classroom and with the changing demographics in the American society at large. Teachers must begin to plan for the plurality students bring to the late twentieth century classroom. Failure to do so would have the detrimental effect of the misdiagnosis of diversity as deficit.

The writer also met with the director of the teachers' center to discuss her inservice training on prereferral strategies. The director was very interested and gave her the application and letter of acceptance. The writer completed the form, even changing the course name so as to attract more teachers. The name of the course was: Special

Education and the Limited English Proficient Student: Are All Placements Justifiable? She provided a brief description of the course and also attached a second page describing each session (see Appendix M).

Week Two:

During this time frame the writer met with the director of the Special Education Teachers' Resource Center (SETRC). This director agreed to cosponsor the training with BETAC by advertising and by providing some funds to pay for consultants. The director planned to mail over 2,800 flyers describing the BETAC/SETRC training.

The writer also met with the director of Special Education Administrators Leadership Training Academy (SEALTA) to discuss joint training sessions. Since SEALTA caters to administrators, the director indicated that he would like to work with BOCES I supervisors since little opportunity is available for administrators' training in the rural and widely scattered districts of the BOCES I BETAC catchment area. The writer planned to contact him for a possible one day joint session with some of the more prominent researchers in the field of bilingual and bilingual special education. The session could be held in late spring or early fall of 1993 as a means of practicum dissemination.

Week Three:

Throughout this time frame, this practicum writer began

to contact some of the best consultants in the field of bilingual education, special education, and teacher training.

Many consultants were contacted, and the writer mailed her course outline (see Appendix M) to them. Other teacher trainers referred the writer to trainers she did not know personally but who had an established statewide reputation. One university professor had expressed an interest in possibly offering the course as a graduate course. The writer fully intended to pursue this avenue, even if it was after the practicum time frame.

The writer fortunately had several consultants show a keen interest in teaching the course. Other consultants were equally interested but did not want to drive to the writer's rural area from the city or points west of the BETAC catchment area.

The writer and her assistant settled on a consultant who is retired and was a top teacher trainer in this field in the New York City public schools. She received some of her training under Alba Ortiz and Nancy Cloud, two of the better known researchers in bilingual education and bilingual special education.

Consultant A, the consultant chosen, received a copy of the writer's entire proposal to study and prepare before meeting with the writer. Consultant A had done previous work for BETAC, and the teachers she taught rated her

highly.

While contacting consultants, the writer was also able to receive sponsorship from the Hunter College Multi-functional Resource Center (MRC) in New York City. Due to the promise of additional sponsorship from MRC, the writer planned to offer a second course on prereferral strategies in the winter of 1993. Two consultants had expressed an interest in teaching this course. It was hoped that by offering the course on Saturdays, more teachers would attend. Thus, during this time frame, the groundwork for all training was being finalized.

Week Four:

This week was used by the writer and her assistant to plan for the Hispanic parent program. The writer initiated several telephone calls to leaders in the professional community who had worked with Hispanic parents. The County Executive's Office Hispanic Advisory Board and the National Association of Puerto Rican/Hispanic Social Workers were very helpful in providing structure to the writer's parent program.

The writer met with Consultant B, one of the social workers from the County Executive's Office. He told the writer how he initiated a similar program west of the BOCES I region. He agreed to help the BETAC office find the best bilingual speakers for the planned audience. These speakers would offer their services gratis, and Consultant B

volunteered to be the first one in order to help kick off the program.

The writer and her assistant had their first planning meeting with four parent volunteers from the Hispanic community. Parent A, a community leader, introduced the BETAC staff to Parents B, C, and D. These three mothers listened intently as the writer outlined her program. Their ideas were also considered, and thus the BETAC office moved the program out of the church and into a day care center since these ladies agreed that not all Hispanics attended church services.

Parents B, C, and D also decided that the best way to advertise these parental seminars was through a fiesta. The whole Hispanic community attends fiestas, and thus this was going to be the opening of the Hispanic parental seminars.

The writer made contact with the day care center suggested by the parents, and a meeting with executive board members was set for early next month.

Flyers were not prepared yet for any parent activities. No mailings commenced during this time frame since most activities were in the initial planning stages.

In sum, this month was extremely busy for the BETAC staff. Besides conducting the normal BETAC activities, special SED activities, and the practicum activities, the staff had to move. However, everything remained on target as plans became finalized for the various activities.

Week Five:

The writer had a second planning meeting with the Hispanic parents, now her Hispanic steering committee. Brother A from the church joined Parent A, the writer, and Parents B, C, and D. A date was established for early fall to host the kick off fiesta for BOCES I BETAC Hispanic parents program. Brother A was not in favor of moving the activity out of the church, but the other steering committee members present felt they would have more success. Brother A did share an observation of this Hispanic community with the writer. He stated that while everyone usually agreed to something, not many attended the activity to which they had agreed. The writer hoped that this would not occur with her planned activities and was determined to do everything possible for its success. It seemed that many divisions besides cultural differences existed among this Central and South American immigrant community. Immigrants from the various Central American and South American countries did not readily associate with one another and had built their own walls of prejudice against each other.

However, the writer was undaunted and agreed to make flyers for the fiesta. Outreach efforts by the BETAC staff would attempt to attract a large audience to the fiesta and hopefully carry that enthusiasm over to the parental seminars. The Hispanic steering committee agreed to meet each week and the next meeting date was set.

The writer also updated her cabinet level supervisor on the practicum project this week. Her supervisor was extremely enthused about the parent training and the future Spanish for professionals course that was in the talking stages at this point. The supervisor had already read the writer's proposal on the inservice training and agreed that this training was being conducted at the best time for BOCES I BETAC. The problem of inappropriate referrals seemed to be capturing the interest of SED and was widespread throughout the state.

Week Six:

The steering committee for the Hispanic parents program fell easily into place this month. Two more meetings were held and plans were finalized for the fiesta and commencement of parent workshops. The writer made a presentation to the board members of the day care center where the parents wanted to house the parental seminars. Members of the board welcomed the BETAC Hispanic parent seminars and agreed to help with publicity and outreach. They also opened their center to BOCES I BETAC to use as one possible site for the Spanish for Professionals course.

During this time frame, the writer provided technical assistance to the publisher of the only bilingual newspaper in her region. The newspaper's editor/owner agreed to announce Hispanic parent programs by BETAC in his paper. Thus even more publicity was being provided to the writer

and her staff in their efforts to inform the Hispanic community of this new parent program.

The writer designed the flyer for the first meeting and met with the first consultant. Consultant B is a certified bilingual social worker who had created a similar program west of the BETAC catchment area.

Week Seven:

The writer's staff, her assistant and secretary, worked hard during this time frame to disseminate the writer's inservice training on prereferral strategies. All school administrators, ESL teachers/coordinators and directors, and many mainstream classroom teachers who had previously taken inservice courses from BETAC were sent welcome back to a new school year letters, a course flyer and registration, and a detailed description of each course section. The writer deliberately took the time to personally write to over 150 professionals in order to spark interest in the course. In addition, SETRC had already mailed the writer's course announcement to its 2,800 members, and the cosponsoring teachers' center mailed their course listings to all teachers in the BOCES I catchment area.

The writer met with her consultant twice during this week. The proposal and its goal were discussed. Consultant A borrowed many books from the writer's personal library, and the two of them carefully discussed how each course session would be presented.

The writer disseminated her full course description to the special educators employed on the BOCES I campus and to the faculty of the BOCES Alternative High School. These faculties were experiencing an increasing LEP population every school year and previously had appealed to the writer's office for training in this area.

Week Eight:

The writer continued to plan to offer a follow-up course to this inservice training on prereferral strategies in the winter of 1993. This course was not part of the writer's initial proposal, but she was pleased to have the opportunity to offer more extensive training.

During this eighth week of practicum implementation, the writer and her assistant received many telephone calls for technical assistance from educators working with LEP students. The writer and her assistant encouraged all callers to spread the word about the inservice training. Most teachers seemed impressed with the way the course was designed.

The writer also presented the course at a secondary school principals luncheon and at her first ESL teachers networking meeting. By the close of the month, 12 participants had already enrolled in the course: Special Education and the Limited English Proficient Student: Are All Placements Justifiable?

Plans for the Spanish for professionals course

continued as the writer made contacts for materials and advice. Several teachers who were native speakers of Spanish had expressed an interest in teaching the course.

The first Hispanic parent seminar planned in the original proposal for week eight was not held. The writer realized that extensive planning and outreach had to be put forth in order to bring this community together. Thus the first parental seminar was set for the last week of the month with Consultant B as the guest speaker. The "fiesta" would come first to kick off the program.

In sum, this second month of implementation was an extremely busy one for BETAC. The planning was more intense since implementation of the practicum's major objectives would commence in the following month. However, the writer was satisfied that steps to successful implementation were underway.

Week Nine:

The writer continued to work with Consultant A who would begin teaching the inservice course/training on prereferral strategies at the end of the month. More resources from the writer's personal library were made available to her and lengthy discussions on session content followed. The writer was satisfied that the consultant would follow the course per her specifications.

During this first week, the Hispanic parents held the kick off fiesta. Over 250 parents, youth, and children

dined on traditional foods and danced to Latin music. The BETAC office and the Hispanic parent steering committee had done an excellent job of outreach! The writer, the BETAC coordinator, was given the opportunity to speak to the attendees. In Spanish, she discussed the upcoming parental seminars and stressed that they were not her seminars but "nuestros" ours. She indicated she wanted active parent participation and direction. Experience had taught her that the members of this community do not want "the professionals" telling them what is to be expected. The writer is very sensitive to this need and is fully accepted by the community. Flyers for the first Hispanic parent seminar were distributed at the fiesta.

Week Ten:

The writer spent the second week of this month preparing for the first parent seminar. Her assistant was provided with materials from Aspira of Washington, D.C. on parenting, and from them she wrote a simple but concise newsletter on the importance of parental involvement in their children's local school. She discussed the high dropout rate for Hispanics and urged parents to work with their children and their children's teachers to insure well planned academic programs. The letter was one page, and the BETAC secretary ran the English version on one side and the Spanish version on the other. Decorations for autumn were placed attractively at the bottom of the first BETAC

bilingual parental newsletter.

Week Eleven:

The writer planned an ESL teachers networking meeting. The teachers seem to enjoy these informal meetings. The theme for the meeting was tolerating difference, and the speaker, a Hispanic school counselor, urged the seven teachers who attended to be aware of their own bias and that of the school environment. The acceptance of the ethnic identity and the language of LEP students, according to the speaker, could only raise student self-esteem, ward off failure and/or referral for special testing.

Week Twelve:

Registration continued for the inservice course on prereferral strategies. Flyers for the first Hispanic parental seminar were more intensely distributed by the BETAC staff and members of the Hispanic community.

The writer had to change the location of the parental seminars from the day care center on Friday evenings to the church on Sunday evenings after the Spanish Mass. A bilingual computer course, established by BETAC and an outreach worker, had to be rescheduled from Mondays and Wednesdays to Wednesdays and Fridays. The writer met with Parent C, a member of the Hispanic parent steering committee. Parent C agreed that at this time a change to the church on Sunday evenings would be a wise decision. She indicated that many Hispanic women were interested in

developing career opportunities and thus would attend a bilingual computer course in lieu of parental seminars. The need for financial security for their children was their first priority.

Week Thirteen:

The inservice course on prereferral strategies began this week with 20 educators. The educators were mainstream teachers (K-8), ESL teachers, special education teachers, one counselor, and one psychologist.

The consultant was prepared and covered the following topics: state guidelines for the education of LEP students and/or LEP students who may be handicapped, technical vocabulary and definitions of what constitutes bilingual education, English as a Second Language, and special education. The role of the BETAC office and its resources were explained. The writer was pleased with this sound introduction to her course. It helped prepare participants for the following weeks' sessions.

During this time frame, the first parental seminar was held. So much planning, dissemination of materials, and parent steering committee meetings precluded the writer from beginning these seminars earlier in the implementation phase of this practicum.

The Hispanic community is widely scattered in the BETAC catchment area, and many of the men and women were still working late on the farms with the fall harvest. Bringing

the community together was not an easy task for the BETAC staff and parent steering committee.

However, success was achieved. Twenty-five parents with their children met late Sunday evening. The best time was after the 7:30 p.m. Spanish Mass. A husband and wife team, Consultant B and Consultant C, addressed the group about participating in school activities. One or two parents said they were active, but many others were not. The newsletter written by the writer's assistant was distributed, and a date for an evaluation meeting with the steering committee was set.

At this meeting, decisions about future meetings and guest speakers were discussed. A slate was set for the following month, and the writer was informed that while the community wanted to discuss their children's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth, their more pressing need was to speak with representatives from the Department of Labor (DOL) on work opportunities and career development.

The writer realized that the need for information on jobs for the bilingual worker and family providers had to take precedence. Security for the family needs had to be met before interest in their children's success at school could begin. Therefore, she contacted Project Trabajo, a state project of the Department of Labor (DOL) in order to find a bilingual speaker for late Sunday evening meetings.

She decided to continue holding the meetings on Sunday evenings since this seemed to suit the needs of the families.

Additional time was spent during this final week of this month working directly with Hispanic youth. The writer and these youngsters would be part of a panel discussion on leadership at a conference designed to empower Hispanic youth. The writer strongly believes that attendance and participation at such conferences helps students to realize that they can achieve and establishes pride in their ethnic identity, culture, and language. This raised self-esteem leads to high school graduation rather than special classes or dropping out altogether.

The writer skillfully avoided a confrontation with members of U.S. English at a town meeting the final week of October. Through intense networking by the writer, the aim of the representatives of U.S. English was thwarted. This town meeting was attended by representatives from the writer's county, state, and professional organizations. The meeting received statewide as well as national recognition. Participating panel members were forewarned of the hidden agenda behind U.S. English. Thus, the resultant town meeting was an open forum in Spanish and English where various speakers informed the community of their services. The writer received many kudos in her success at keeping the meeting away from the agenda proposed by U.S. English. This

organization wants English to be the official language of government and does not believe that bilingual education is of any benefit to youngsters.

The writer strongly believes that denial of one's language is akin to denial of who one is. If one is robbed of their ethnic identity, their self image is destroyed along with their ability to succeed in the dominant culture. Cummins (1984, 1986, 1989, 1991) is a strong proponent of developmental bilingual education (DBE) programs for this reason. DBE programs do not delay students' acquisition of English; rather they produce students speaking two languages. Such students are an asset to the cultural diversity existing in late twentieth century America.

The writer is adamant on this point and is sustained in her belief by the works of Cummins (1984), Hamayan and Damico (1991), and Baca and Cervantes (1989). Sound programs which recognize students for who they are and where they come from strengthens such students' self-concept. A strong self-concept, as previously stated throughout this report, leads to academic success and the avoidance of inappropriate referrals for special testing and special classes. Mainstream society should never be permitted to give students a handicap when in reality none exists.

Week Fourteen:

The writer's office began the week with the second session of the inservice course for teachers. The

consultant worked on classroom strategies of whole language and literacy, Total Physical Response (TPR) (Krashen, 1982), and second language acquisition theories. She especially stressed the work of Cummins (1984) as she urged teachers to be acutely aware that LEP youngsters develop Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) before Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). Failure to recognize that students have not fully developed the mastery of the language of texts (CALP) leads educators to mistakenly believe that such students are handicapped. The truth is that these students are developing their skills in $L_2$ (their second language) and while speaking comfortably with peers in $L_2$, they are not yet comfortable with the academic language needed for school success in this new second language ($L_2$).

The writer also had the opportunity to attend two workshops related to her practicum. One was led by Dr. Alba Ortiz. Dr. Ortiz spoke of prereferral strategies and the use of Teacher Assistance Teams (TAT) (Garcia & Ortiz, 1988) by LEAs who wish to avoid inappropriate placement of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) youngsters. Dr. Ortiz validated most of the work on prereferral strategies that the writer had incorporated in her teacher training for this practicum.

The writer and her assistant also attended a workshop held by a bilingual speech pathologist, psychologist, and

classroom teacher. The three presenters spoke of linguistic and cultural diversity with regard to assessment. The works of Dr. Alba Ortiz were referenced, as well as the New York State guidelines (The University of the State of New York, 1990). These workshops attended by bilingual professionals demonstrated to the writer that the mainstream teachers are the true targeted audience if teachers' perceptions are going to change. Many bilingual professionals attending such workshops already know the information presented!

During this week, the writer spoke with one of her Hispanic parents who gave her more direction on the monthly parental seminars. The young mother told her that the Hispanic children are ashamed of their ethnic identity, family culture, language, and modes of dress. These children, according to this mother, seem to be developing emotional problems and are at risk of failing in school. The writer, unable to obtain a commitment from DOL, invited a consultant to the November parental seminar, who is Hispanic and possesses expertise in early and middle childhood education. Consultant C would meet with the writer to formulate plans for the next parental seminar. The writer's assistant was going to write the next parent newsletter on the importance of maintaining the maternal language in the home.

The writer also had a meeting with town officials and one school district, i.e., local education agency (LEA).

The meeting was to discuss services to help the Hispanic community establish pride in their linguistic and ethnic identity. BETAC would continue to work on specific programs, such as the parenting seminars, the Spanish for Professionals course, and in addition, a bilingual General Educational Development (GED) course.

Families must stay intact if children are going to succeed in school. The goal of this town meeting was to keep U.S. English out of the town. The prejudicial aim of such an organization could only continue to disrupt the linguistic and cultural diversity the town was fighting to hold together. Many town official documents were already in Spanish, and an Hispanic outreach worker would be hired with community development funds for the next fiscal year.

The Hispanic youth in the writer's catchment area had an opportunity to meet with other youth from across the county at the annual 1992 Puerto Rican/Hispanic Social Workers Hispanic Youth Conference where they discussed leadership skills in a session led by the writer's office and a neighboring BETAC. They also heard about college opportunities and other strategies for success as future Latino leaders. These conferences inspire youth to stay in school and allow them the opportunity to affirm their identity and language. November 6, 1992 was proclaimed Hispanic Youth Day by the County Executive as he addressed the students.

Week Fifteen:

The writer's BETAC office held the third session of the inservice training on prereferral strategies. Consultant A spoke of the work of Dr. Alba Ortiz and the comprehensive prereferral strategies of Garcia and Ortiz (1988). Garcia and Ortiz recommend that the educators look at the many variables which can impact on a LEP student's success. Some of these are: teacher variables, curriculum exposure variables, instructional variables, student variables, and evaluation of instruction variables. Resources such as state education publications, consultants, and staff development trainers, along with the creation of Teacher Assistance Teams (TAT), are strongly urged by Garcia and Ortiz (1988).

Consultant A went carefully through the article referenced in the above paragraphs, and in addition she stressed cultural diversity. Consultant A briefly but succinctly reviewed cultural characteristics exhibited by CLD children from various parts of the world. The writer noted the interest in obtaining more cultural information by participants. A course on cultural differences would be one way of disseminating this practicum. It is important that educators learn to distinguish cultural diversity from handicap and/or deficit.

This same week the writer was able to make firm contacts and obtain a BOCES facility for the winter 1993

teacher training on prereferral strategies. She planned, as previously mentioned, to continue this training and had successfully secured some top consultants and other cosponsors to offset the incurred expenses and to attract a larger audience of participants.

In addition, the writer and her assistant were able to design two sections of a Spanish for professionals course commencing in the new year. One course would be for educators and the other was going to be for personnel who work with Hispanic families in their communities (see Appendix M).

A rough draft of the writer's booklet on prereferral strategies was finished this week and sent to the writer's typist. This was the writer's third outcome for this practicum. An associate in bilingual education had agreed to edit the content of the booklet (see Appendix K).

Two Hispanic parents visited the BETAC office. They discussed the need for CLD parents to take pride in their native language and to use it in the home. Many children were not proud of who they are and thus were having trouble academically and socially at school. The writer's assistant had already planned to address this issue in the second Hispanic parents' newsletter. The writer had several conversations with Consultant C for the next parental seminar. As previously mentioned, such consultant has expertise in early and middle childhood education and was

born in South America. Therefore, she could easily relate to the writer's targeted population. The presentation by DOL was put on the calendar for the first month of the new year.

The BETAC staff attended a meeting at BOCES I Alternative High School. The writer explained the need of establishing an intensive English language center at the BOCES I Alternative High School. Secondary mainstream teachers were at a loss as to what to do with newly arrived LEP students. Some students were already in their second school year, and most of those who had no prior educational experiences were at risk of failure or being inappropriately referred to special education. The writer and the lead teacher at the Alternative High School vowed to work hard to put this program, i.e., center, in place by the commencement of the second half of the school year.

Week Sixteen:

The fourth session of the inservice course on prereferral strategies was held. Consultant A focused on the writing process (Graves, 1978, 1983). Consultant A also spoke of the techniques of semantic mapping and demonstrated how mainstream teachers can use this strategy within any content area and across grade levels.

Furthermore, she took the time to explain that many CLD youngsters have to learn the formation of letters of the alphabet due to cultural differences, and one cannot assume

that such CLD youngsters can easily accomplish this task. She implied that such assumptions belittle the child and his/her self-esteem and place the student at risk of failure or an improper referral.

Techniques like semantic mapping, journal writing, dictation and cloze procedures can be used successfully with LEP students (Baca & Almanza, 1991) to encourage language acquisition and development of content area skills. Five (1992) was successful in using journal writing with her LEP students, some of whom the system had earmarked as potentially learning disabled.

Consultant A did an excellent job during this fourth session. She demonstrated how process writing (Five, 1992) as an effective tool can raise student self-esteem, measure progress, and avoid unnecessary referrals. She suggested that teachers keep portfolios of student writing samples in all content areas and across grade levels.

That week three teachers in the course told the writer that they were becoming more sensitive to the needs of language minority students. These educators felt that in the past years such students were incorrectly placed in special classes. The writer was satisfied to learn that sensitivity and advocacy were developing among course participants.

The writer met with the SETRC director and her cabinet level supervisor to set the winter 1993 schedule for the

second inservice course on prereferral strategies. The same was done for two courses of Spanish for professionals (see Appendix M).

It was the writer's aim to have the present inservice course enrollees take the Spanish course the following term (winter 1993). After learning some prereferral strategies, these educators with some basic knowledge of the major minority language, Spanish, would be able to facilitate basic communication among students, teachers, and parents. Such communication was going to help Hispanic students maintain pride in their language and identity. Such pride raises self-esteem and academic growth for those who are truly non-handicapped.

Plans for the second Hispanic parent seminar were finalized this week. Hispanic community leaders, ESL teachers, and town officials all helped in dissemination of materials. The seminar was planned for week seventeen.

Week Seventeen:

This last week of this month was short, but much was accomplished by the writer and her staff.

On Sunday, a second Hispanic parent seminar was held. The writer came prepared with refreshments, a video, and children's books in Spanish and English. It was a very rainy Sunday evening and the last late Sunday evening Mass.

Due to the inclement weather, only 15 adults with their children attended the parent seminar. The program was

further complicated in that no one parent on the steering committee was given the key to the school located behind the church. Thus, to save the evening, an informal session was held in the church and led by the consultant hired by the writer. No refreshments could be served in the church so the consultant wisely kept her discussion to just under 30 minutes.

Consultant C spoke of maintenance and use of the mother tongue at home. Studies have shown (Cummins, 1986, 1989) that parents who continue to use the native language ($L_1$) at home provide their children with a structural and experiential base for successful acquisition of the second language ($L_2$). A newsletter on this topic written by the writer's assistant in both languages was distributed.

The writer, due to parent requests and the advice of her Hispanic steering committee, changed the speakers from those described in her original proposal. This was to be a program led by parents and facilitated by BETAC.

Due to the low turnout of parents, the writer invited Consultant C back to talk of children's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development. This topic could not be covered adequately this Sunday, so the consultant elaborated on the newsletter topic.

The next day, a flyer was quickly designed for the following month's Hispanic parental seminar and arrangements made to disseminate the flyer.

The fifth session of the writer's inservice training on prereferral strategies was held. The topic was portfolio and performance assessment. Consultant A explained that all content area teachers should use portfolios with LEP students as a way to measure academic growth. This growth, albeit not as quick as the growth of proficient speakers of English, can demonstrate student ability and not disability. In genuine cases of disability, the folder will be one piece of evidence of lack of growth and suspected handicap.

The consultant also referred to Bloom's taxonomy (Bloom & Krathwohl, 1977) with reference to the BICS and CALP of Cummins (1984). Again she hoped to make teachers realize that knowledge, comprehension, and application are easier to acquire and are related to Cummins' BICS, whereas analysis, synthesis, and evaluation are proficiencies related to CALP (Cummins, 1984). Teachers' misunderstandings of BICS and CALP in language acquisition can lead them to erroneously believe the learner has a deficit and not a difference as such learner is acquiring language.

The writer received a telephone call from Dr. Leonard Baca of the Bueno Center for Multicultural Education, University of Colorado. He planned to be in the writer's state in January and remembered to call the writer since she had previously requested that he come to talk with administrators and teachers.

Dr. Baca is well known in the field of bilingual

education and bilingual special education. He has written extensively and the writer's readers will note her references to his many works. The writer was thrilled to have someone renowned in the field agreeing to come to her rural area to talk to administrators and teachers on prereferral strategies. Due to Dr. Baca's tight winter 1993 schedule, he would work with the writer to schedule a workshop in her catchment area for the 1993-1994 school year.

Week Eighteen:

The sixth session of inservice training on prereferral strategies took place. Consultant A focused on strategies for mainstream teachers of content area subject matter. She presented ways of using graphic organizers to help make the academic language of texts more comprehensible to LEP students. She stressed the importance of the use of graphic organizers and the teaching of other learning strategies to LEP students to promote learning (Chamot & O'Malley, 1986) in order that such students more fully comprehend the content being taught and thus avoid failure. Consultant A also discussed ways of grouping students so that various levels and student need could be accommodated in mainstream classes.

In sum, this consultant reiterated that use of graphic organizers and students working in small groups are ways to have LEP students experience success and avoidance of

inappropriate referrals to special education classes.

During this week, the writer met with a teacher she previously interviewed to teach GED classes in Spanish. The need for this course had been previously expressed by the Hispanic population in the BETAC catchment area. The offering of such a course through BOCES would raise the self-esteem of CLD parents who would experience pride upon obtaining a high school equivalency diploma. Many Hispanic parents, while conversant in English, have fears about studying in English. Thus this GED course was going to allay their fears and offer them an opportunity to grow academically and experience pride in their language since Spanish was going to be the medium of instruction.

Parents would therefore be in the position of role model for their LEP youngsters. If parents of CLD youngsters could "graduate" from high school, the children of these parents would strive to do the same and even more. The significance of this course, offered for the first time in the writer's catchment area, could not be downplayed.

The writer and her assistant worked hard to insure more success with the next Hispanic parent seminar. Notices were placed in the Hispanic newspaper, flyers were distributed to LEAs, churches, town government offices, and day care centers. This was the widest outreach to date.

The Hispanic clergy even promised to make certain that the church school was open and/or leave the key with the

writer. The clergy offered to provide the refreshments. The BETAC staff hoped to attract a larger audience for this month due to more outreach efforts and due to the fact that the services in Spanish were changed to late afternoon rather than early evening.

Week Nineteen:

The last and seventh session of the inservice training on prereferral strategies was held. Consultant A had a question and answer period with course participants, as well as a short session on test taking strategies for LEP students. She listed words that frequently appear on tests in order that teachers would understand that language minority youngsters need to understand how to apply these words in answering test questions. CLD students will frequently fail exams, not due to lack of content knowledge, but to misunderstanding of test directions. Unfortunately, these same students may then come to be viewed as handicapped by the mainstream classroom teachers.

Consultant A also informed participants where materials were available at minimal cost. The writer planned to obtain order forms for such materials from the New York City public schools. New York City teachers and administrators have worked hard to put together many resources in the area of second language learning and multicultural diversity.

Course participants completed evaluation forms for the writer and expressed their extreme satisfaction with the

teachings presented by the course consultant. The writer distributed a follow-up course registration form to the participants and a Spanish for Professionals course registration form. Both courses would commence in 1993.

The writer and her assistant prepared for the next Hispanic parent seminar. One of the parents on the writer's steering committee had the key to the school and was going to be sure refreshments were available. Consultant C was contacted, as well as the church secretary, as a reminder of the upcoming event. The writer expected better attendance at this seminar than that of the previous month.

The writer was also contacted this week by a speaker from Project Trabajo. This man was going to be the January DOL speaker requested by parents. The writer realized that particular needs of parents had to be met if her efforts to increase their attention to their children's academic success was going to be fruitful. Worries about bringing home a decent wage and/or finding work in reality divert parents' thinking from their children's school needs.

The writer's first rough draft of her booklet on prereferral strategies, "Intervention Strategies for the Education of the Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Student: A Proactive Approach to Prevent Inappropriate Referrals of Potential English Speakers to Special Education Settings" (see Appendix K), was approved by her advisor, Dr. Barry Birnbaum. Dr. Birnbaum was so pleased with the

booklet that he asked the writer's permission to share her proposal and booklet with an ESOL methods class he was currently teaching. The writer also planned to send him other materials he could use in his course.

This week marked the end of one inservice course but not the end of the writer's work in her catchment area. A second course on prereferral strategies was in place for early 1993 as well as two sections of Spanish for professionals. The writer was pleased with the progress to date.

Week Twenty:

The third Hispanic parent seminar was held after the Spanish Mass on late Sunday afternoon. Arrangements went very well. The school was open, refreshments were available, and many announcements had been placed in the church bulletin and local papers. The writer was disappointed that only nine parents attended. Attendance at Mass was low, and it seemed that those who attended wished to immediately go home. On Friday, the writer's catchment area had experienced the worst "noreaster" in a century. Many, many homes were flooded, and others were blown entirely into the ocean. Thus several residents were homeless and/or without electricity, heat, or water. By Sunday, most residents had experienced their sixth destructive high tide. It might have been wiser to cancel the meeting, but the writer was unsure if many or few

residents were planning on coming to the Spanish Mass that evening.

The speaker/consultant focused on children's physical, social, and cognitive growth. The small group was extremely interested, and the speaker was asked to return on another occasion. The writer would plan to have her return after the project period. January's speaker would come from Project Trabajo, a DOL program.

Dr. Leonard Baca of the University of Colorado contacted the writer this week. He offered the writer a workshop on a day at the end of June. However, most teachers would be on vacation at that time. Thus the writer planned to meet with him at the end of June in New York City to make plans for a mini conference on bilingual special education for the late fall of 1993. Thus dissemination of her practicum was already in its planning stages.

Since the writer's booklet on prereferral strategies (see Appendix K) was approved by Dr. Birnbaum for dissemination, she began the task of mailing and logging the mailings for record keeping and/or reminder notices to those who would not return evaluation instruments. Each return envelope was numbered as was each recipient. Thus it would be easy to mail reminder notices and evaluation forms. Evaluation forms were run off on light green paper to attract the recipient's attention. One hundred twenty-six booklets, cover letters, evaluation forms, and stamped self-

addressed envelopes were sent out this week.

Flyers for the writer's second course on prereferral strategies, entitled Strategies to Prevent the LEP Student From Becoming At Risk (see Appendix M), were mailed by the BETAC secretary, as were the notices of the two sections for Spanish for professionals. SETRC, a cosponsor with BETAC, had already done an extensive mailing for the course on prereferral strategies. Thus registration by telephone opened this week, and 12 educators contacted the BETAC secretary to register. Contracts with consultants to teach all three course sessions on prereferral strategies were finalized.

A text suitable for Spanish for professionals was still not found. The writer and her assistant continued to review publishers' samples.

The week ended with the writer and her assistant becoming part of one East End town's Hispanic Advisory Board. Members of this board were to become involved in all issues facing Hispanic families and their children.

Week Twenty-One:

This was a short week for the BETAC staff, though busy. The BETAC secretary completed the enormous task of mailings for the winter 1993 inservice training on prereferral strategies and the two sections of the Spanish course. Registration for all three courses continued to climb, and careful record keeping was initiated by the writer.

The consultant for one of the Spanish for professionals courses was putting her own materials together. Since she would be teaching town workers who dealt with Hispanic families, she decided to put her own curriculum in place and named her course Spanish for Communication. The writer's office was going to bind the materials for her as the course progressed so each student would have their own "book."

Evaluations on the writer's booklet, "Intervention Strategies for the Education of the Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Student: A Proactive Approach to Prevent Inappropriate Referrals of Potential English Speakers to Special Education Settings," were incoming via the mail despite the Christmas season. The writer developed a system for logging returned evaluations and made plans to do a large statewide and national mailing during her vacation period. Thus the work on practicum activities continued at home.

Week Twenty-Two:

The writer, ahead of schedule with her booklet on prereferral strategies, continued mailings of this booklet. She had originally intended to write the booklet this week, but fortunately that task was accomplished earlier with approval given to disseminate by her Nova advisor.

Two hundred booklets were mailed at the end of this week. The writer was sending the booklets to ESL teachers and mainstream teachers in her state and throughout the

nation. This busy clerical work of stuffing and sealing envelopes had to be done, and the writer recruited family members to help her.

The writer also took the time to reflect on practicum activities to date. She was proud of the fact that everything seemed to be in place. Parental seminars were planned to be held monthly, and the intent of BOCES and BETAC to hire a Hispanic outreach worker was going to be helpful for the writer in achieving her goals of working with larger numbers of parents.

A second course on prereferral strategies, Strategies to Prevent the LEP Student From Becoming At Risk, was opened for registration. This second course also was not part of the original proposal but emanated from it.

Two sections, in lieu of one proposed, on Spanish conversation for professionals were open for registration. One course was almost filled to a maximum. The courses were entitled Spanish for Professionals and Spanish for Communication. Spanish for Professionals was being offered for inservice credit by the teachers' center. It was also cosponsored by the Hunter College Multifunctional Resource Center. The second course was held for town and agency workers; thus the title Spanish for Communication seemed more apropos. This course was cosponsored by an East End town in the writer's catchment area and did not offer inservice credit.

Thus the writer was going to begin 1993 with lots of enthusiasm for the projects created by this practicum. The ultimate goal of these various courses was the amelioration of the education of language minority students, thereby reducing inappropriate referrals for special education classes.

Week Twenty-Three:

The writer received three telephone calls about her booklet on prereferral strategies. One caller asked permission to disseminate the booklet and evaluation form to her faculty; the other two callers informed her that the work was very well done and the information was badly needed. Over 50 evaluation forms were returned to the writer by the week's end.

The Spanish for Communication course was filled with a maximum of 22 by the close of the week. The writer planned to offer other sections in the spring and/or fall 1993 due to the demand for training in the Spanish language.

The second course on prereferral strategies continued to receive enrollments. Twenty enrollees had registered by the close of the week.

Week Twenty-Four:

The writer made adequate preparation for the first session of the Spanish for Communication course. Spanish Teacher A prepared packets for each class member; the writer prepared attendance sheets, a ledger with names, addresses,

paid and not paid, and check numbers in order of the date of when participants registered.

Twenty-two course members attended the first session of Spanish for Communication. The class consisted of health professionals, educators, police officers and fire officials, elected town officials, and other interested parties. Spanish Teacher A began with a simple introduction to the language. Greetings, verb phrases, and classroom objects were taught. Students had to greet each other and ask simple questions. Spanish Teacher A surveyed the class to learn what kind of work experience each member brought to the class. She planned on developing a repertoire of phrases for the different professions represented.

The second Spanish course, Spanish for Professionals, was for educators only. As stated earlier, the writer was able to obtain additional funding from a federal source so that all participants would receive two inservice credits. Spanish Teacher B, the writer's assistant, prepared the course curriculum with help from others who had previously designed Spanish courses for educators. She was to begin her course the following week.

The writer received over 100 evaluations through the mail of her booklet on prereferral strategies. She also mailed another 100 copies of the booklet and evaluation form. Evaluations received at the end of the second week in January were very positive.

The writer continued to work with the three consultants who would teach the next course section on prereferral strategies, i.e., Strategies to Prevent the LEP Student From Becoming At Risk.

By the close of this week, her next speaker for the Hispanic parent seminars was finalized. The speaker was from the Department of Labor's (DOL) Project Trabajo. The Project Trabajo coordinator from New York City sent information in Spanish and English. This indeed had been another busy week for the writer in her duties as BETAC coordinator.

Week Twenty-Five:

The inservice training on Spanish for Professionals began this week. This course was for educators only. Eight educators enrolled, and Spanish Teacher B, a native of Peru, taught simple greetings teachers could use so as to have verbal interactions with their Hispanic students. She also presented ways to greet parents and spoke of the ethnic diversity in the Central American and South American culture.

The writer and her assistant prepared a one page newsletter for the next Hispanic parent seminar. The letter focused on what a parent should do if the local school initiates a referral for testing to determine if a handicap is present. Both the writer and her assistant were looking to contract with a Peruvian psychologist to talk with

parents on the necessity of school involvement, especially if a referral is initiated by a teacher.

The writer's secretary continued to receive registration forms for the second course on prereferral strategies. The writer was in the midst of mailing and receiving evaluation and feedback on her fi[illegible]draft of her booklet on prereferral strategies.

Even though much work on the writer's major practicum had been accomplished, still more remained to be done. The writer made plans at the end of the week to meet again with her Spanish language consultants to discuss measurements and evaluation of success with these two courses. The practicum had become a major part of BETAC's work, but it also had become a vital and important contribution to children, parents, and educators.

Week Twenty-Six:

The writer visited Spanish Teacher A's class, Spanish for Communication. She spoke briefly to the class about the collaboration between her office and the town in the planning of this course. Spanish Teacher A was using a text entitled Entradas: El Español Por Etapas (Higgs, Liskin-Gasparro, & Medley, 1989) and was planning to order 10 texts with the accompanying tapes for class members. Spanish Teacher A was also using Learn Spanish, Español, the Fast and Fun Way (Hammit, 1985) text and tape. Spanish Teacher A greeted the class members in Spanish and reviewed simple

greetings as a warm-up. She then proceeded to introduce subject pronouns.

Spanish Teacher B's class, Spanish for Professionals, reviewed ways to contact parents either by phone or by mail. The text used by Spanish Teacher B is no longer in print, but Spanish Teacher B also used some of the same materials as Spanish Teacher A. Besides the texts, Spanish Teacher B honored requests, as did Spanish Teacher A, from class members. Both instructors were learning to personalize their lessons so that individual needs of class participants were met. In a course such as this, the writer strongly recommends the employment of native speakers. To meet the requests of various professionals in both courses would have been difficult if the teacher was not a native speaker of the language.

The writer began her second inservice training on Strategies to Prevent the LEP Student From Becoming At Risk of failure or placement in a special class setting. Twenty-nine out of a pre-registration of 33 educators attended the first five-hour session. The professionals were from the following disciplines: speech pathology, nursing, social work, elementary and secondary education, Pre-K special education, foreign languages, English as a Second Language, counseling, and home economics. All worked with LEP students and stated that they felt these students were overrepresented in special education classes.

Consultant D introduced the course by reviewing appropriate definitions of ESL and bilingual education. He discussed state requirements and the lack of laws requiring all schools to employ certified teachers of ESL.

Consultant D focused on the LEP learner and the linguistic diversity these students bring to their new country. He spent considerable time on the language of Central and South America, namely Spanish, since most students served by the educators were of Hispanic origin. Consultant D spoke of how phonemic and lexical differences between and among Hispanic cultures and the Spanish language, and between the Spanish language and English, could easily be misunderstood as a language handicap rather than a linguistic difference. He demonstrated how Hispanic students can misunderstand sounds in the English language which are not used in their language.

Consultant D used the Language Assessment Scales (LAS) (De Avila & Duncan, 1981) to demonstrate how educators with appropriate training could learn to assess a student's language ability in English. He spoke of code switching especially when a student has to retell a story. Retelling a story that a student has heard is a significant determinant of English proficiency on the LAS. Code switching, that is, changing from English to the native language and vice versa, is not an indicator of a deficit, but does show that the student needs to develop English but

is comprehending the story. This comprehension is shown by the student's ability to give back the story in two languages since he/she is not yet able to use English proficiently.

Consultant D stressed the importance of understanding what level of competency in the native language and in English students bring to the new school. Evaluation of LEP students by sensitive, well trained native language teachers who are able to test that student's ability in two languages can prevent an early misdiagnosis of a problem within the learner.

Unfortunately, this month's Hispanic parent seminar was cancelled by the presenter from Project Trabajo. The writer initiated contact with the director of Project Trabajo to try to arrange for a future date.

The writer and her assistant disseminated their third Hispanic parents' newsletter. This letter focused on the topic of special education referrals and parent rights and responsibilities.

The writer mailed out 100 more copies of her booklet on prereferral strategies. To date 426 copies had been disseminated statewide and nationwide. A significant number of responses were being returned weekly to the writer at the end of January 1993.

Week Twenty-Seven:

The two Spanish inservice courses continued. Enrolled

participants to whom the writer spoke were very pleased with the methodologies of both Spanish teachers. Spanish Teacher B's participants requested some grammatical explanation rather than pure conversation. The writer told Spanish Teacher B that from her experiences with adult learners of a second language, the teaching of grammatical structures was necessary. She told the teacher not to make it her main focus but to provide the explanation when needed and/or when requested.

The writer made arrangements with the consultant for the second inservice session on prereferral strategies for the at risk LEP student. That session was to be held in February. Consultant E listened carefully to what Consultant D had taught, discussed the background of participants from the writer's perspective, and decided to begin her planning according to the writer's observations of the teachers enrolled and content already presented. Consultant E and the writer wanted enrollees to feel a sense of continuity in the course with the work already presented by Consultant D.

The writer and her assistant were pleasantly surprised to be asked to help the coordinator of the migrant tutorial programs with a Hispanic parental seminar. Since many of the Hispanic parents served by the writer's office are considered migrants due to the nature of the farm work they do, the coordinator of the migrant program and the BETAC

office had contact with many of the same parents. Thus a joint workshop was planned for the end of the month on parent rights in the school system. The Peruvian psychologist and the speaker from DOL's Project Trabajo were unable to be placed on the BETAC calendar over the next few months. The writer found that it was extremely difficult to get consultants to travel to her rural area. Even the commitment of Hispanic parents seemed to be declining. Thus, the speakers from the writer's original proposal changed per parent request, lack of sufficient parent attendance, and refusal by consultants to travel too far from the city.

During this same week, the writer's secretary made more copies of the third parent newsletter on parents' rights and special education. The writer planned to continue to disseminate the newsletter as she did outreach work the following week.

Responses continued to arrive from around the nation on the writer's booklet, "Intervention Strategies for the Education of the Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Student: A Proactive Approach to Prevent Inappropriate Referrals of Potential English Speakers to Special Education Settings" (see Appendix K). Most respondents were very positive in their ratings.

Week Twenty-Eight:

The two Spanish conversational courses were receiving

many pleasing comments from participants who contacted the writer's office. Spanish Teacher B and a bilingual counselor offered a 90 minute cultural presentation as part of the lesson. Spanish Teacher B and the counselor, natives of Peru and the Dominican Republic respectively, spoke of the various commonalities and differences in culture among the Central and South American countries.

The writer was instrumental in the hiring of an Hispanic outreach worker. She interviewed her and pushed up her appointment date. The worker helped to disseminate the third Hispanic parental newsletter and the flyer for the fourth Hispanic parent seminar to be held at the end of February. The writer's assistant did the same on her travels to various meetings.

Evaluations of the writer's booklet continued to arrive in the mail. Some evaluators took the time to write positive comments on how useful the information was to their particular class or school. The writer also received several telephone calls from readers again expressing the urgent need for this knowledge.

Thus, the writer felt she was at least raising awareness of large numbers of educators to the gravity of inappropriate referrals of LEP students to special education. Teachers now had some material and reference to become knowledgeable advocates for these children.

Week Twenty-Nine:

Due to the winter break in most schools this week, no inservice training was offered by the BETAC office. However, the writer and her assistant finalized arrangements for the second session on the at risk LEP student and the fourth parental seminar. The arrangements were mostly custodial in nature. The writer needed to be sure the buildings for both days/events were going to be open and that chairs were going to be arranged according to the presenters' needs.

The writer also made certain that more flyers for the parental seminar were disseminated and flyers were left at the church to be distributed with the weekly bulletin.

The writer and her assistant planned to travel to Houston, Texas for the National Association of Bilingual Education convention the following week. Therefore, all details for the seminar and inservice training had to be completed by the end of this week.

Week Thirty:

On Monday, Spanish Teacher A held her Spanish for Communication class, this being the fifth out of ten sessions. Spanish Teacher B made an audio cassette tape so that her students in the Spanish for Professionals course would have a tape with which to practice their new Spanish phrases. Since her class enrollment consisted of teachers, Spanish Teacher B was sure to include vocabulary and phrases

teachers could use with Hispanic parents.

On Tuesday, the writer and her assistant, Spanish Teacher B, had the opportunity to attend the National Association of Bilingual Education's annual conference in Houston, Texas. The main concern of the organization's leadership were the possible changes in Title VII. Title VII provides federal funds to LEAs and state educational associations (SEAs) for various bilingual programs throughout the nation. The comments of many well known specialists in bilingual education, such as Dr. Leonard Baca from the University of Colorado, were that teacher education programs would have to change and/or expand. The writer was satisfied that her current staff development for this practicum centered more on mainstream teachers than on bilingual or ESL teachers. These teachers needed the skills to prevent inappropriate referrals of language minority (LM) students to special education. Furthermore, the nationwide problem of overreferral of LEP students to special classes was clearly stated at various sessions of the NABE convention.

The writer and her assistant also became part of NABE's special interest group (SIG) on bilingual special education. The conference was quite informative and also allowed the writer to do some networking for next fiscal year. She made tentative arrangements for some speakers of national prominence to travel to her catchment area.

The second session of Strategies to Prevent the LEP Student From Becoming At Risk was held on Saturday. The presenter, Consultant E, focused on dimensions of language proficiency as presented by Cummins (1984), strategies to promote success rather than failure in the mainstream classroom. She specifically stressed why special education hinders dramatically the $L_2$ learner, and why a realia rich ambiance is so important to second language learners. She underscored the use of whole language strategies with LEP youngsters.

This presenter conducted a simulation exercise with the teachers to demonstrate how LEP youngsters feel when overwhelmed by their inability to comprehend class instruction. Some students withdraw and simply mimic the remainder, others become hostile or extremely frustrated, and some even resort to negative behaviors such as laughing inappropriately in order to handle the discomfort. The writer witnessed these behaviors among the teachers in the simulation exercise as soon as they lost control over comprehension.

Consultant E clarified another debatable point among educators who feel that the small classes provided by special education actually benefit LEP students. Consultant E stated emphatically that the methodology used in special education classes is unsuitable to students who have no disability but are simply acquiring the language. Such

students should never be placed in classes where children have language deficits. LEP youngsters need role models among their English speaking peers who have no linguistic deficits and do not need to have language learning broken down into discrete skills such as the special educator may do. $L_1$ learners need to acquire English developmentally in a classroom environment where the teacher is sensitive to their needs and trained in specific strategies which promote and do not hinder learning. Consultant E concluded the five hour session by providing a bibliography so that educators could do further reading on their own.

The area of inappropriate referrals to special education includes so many variables that even the two courses, i.e., fall 1992 and winter 1993, offered by the writer were never going to provide all the training needed. Hence the writer planned to continue training in the next fiscal year.

The writer was satisfied to know that at this point her practicum participants were becoming more aware of the problem of misplacing LEP students in special classes and/or referring them for testing for such classes. From her contacts with educators who had taken or were taking her training, who had read her booklet, and who were studying the Spanish language, she learned that such educators were acutely aware of resources for a more thorough assessment of LEP students and were using many of the learned prereferral

strategies.

Week Thirty-One:

The writer, her assistant, and the coordinator of migrant tutorial programs hosted the fourth Hispanic parent seminar for this project. Eight Hispanic parents with their children attended a 40 minute meeting after the Sunday evening Spanish Mass. In Spanish and English the discussion focused on parent rights in the school system, the differences the students may encounter in their new setting, and the importance of home school communication. Due to declining attendance and a conversation with Parent C, a member of the original steering committee, the writer decided that this time of day was not drawing significant parents to warrant further meetings. This parent told the writer that the Hispanic community is unhappy with this time of day for church services.

The new Hispanic outreach worker confirmed the above. She told the writer that many Hispanics even wished to build their own church. The writer will continue to maintain communication with parents, but not through organized meetings after church services on Sundays.

The two Spanish language courses continued and were receiving positive comments. Several participants called the writer to ask about continued instruction and stated their extreme satisfaction with both instructors. The writer cannot underscore enough the importance of using

native speakers and having these speakers adjust their outline to the needs and wishes of class members.

Responses to the writer's booklet on prereferral strategies were still incoming. To date more than half of those to whom a mailing was sent had responded. The writer saw no need to send reminder letters at this point. Perhaps the topic was one that so badly needed to be addressed that respondents avidly read the material and completed the quick evaluation form. Five hundred sixteen introductory letters, booklets, evaluation forms, and stamped self-addressed envelopes had been sent during the project period.

Before the close of the week, the writer contacted the consultant for the last inservice training for teachers on prereferral strategies/strategies to prevent LEP students from becoming at risk. The writer was extremely satisfied that by the end of the month, her four outcomes would be shown to have had a significant impact on creating an awareness and advocacy among mainstream educators in that they would be using many of the learned prereferral strategies before, or in lieu of, referring. The writer believed that students would be less likely to be erroneously referred.

Final evaluation forms for her trainings were mailed by the writer to her practicum advisor. The writer's cabinet level supervisor was also given an update on the practicum outcomes.

Week Thirty-Two:

The week began with Spanish Teachers A and B offering their Spanish language courses. The writer requested a meeting with Spanish Teacher A to discuss the continuation of her course. Since her course was not sponsored by the teachers' center, it was easier to continue her course for ten more weeks after the project's close. Spanish Teacher A's course was sponsored by BETAC and the town in which the attendees were enrolled.

Due to a prediction of blizzard-like conditions and freezing rain, the writer's secretary called all participants in the course on prereferral strategies, i.e., the at risk LEP student, to cancel that Saturday's training. The writer cautions anyone planning training to have an emergency telephone chain or some quick contact system in place.

Fortunately, it was not too difficult to reschedule. Consultant F was so anxious to teach this session on the overaged LEP student that she even rearranged her schedule. The course was to be held on Sunday of the next week. In addition to the telephone calls made by the BETAC secretary, all course participants were immediately sent a written letter.

The writer used the inclement weather to tally the responses to her booklet on prereferral strategies. Three hundred seventeen replies had been received to that date.

She had mailed 516 booklets, evaluation forms, letters of introduction, and stamped self-addressed envelopes. A response of 317 was very pleasing to her.

Week Thirty-Three:

The writer used the beginning of the week to contact by telephone the educators who had taken her first course on prereferral strategies in the fall of 1992. Out of the original 14 enrollees, she had informally chatted with 11 by the week's end. The writer wished to know if the fall training had any impact on these educators' work with LEP students. The course evaluations seemed satisfactory at the close of the course. However, the writer wanted to know more.

The 11 participants with whom she conversed admitted more sensitivity to and advocacy for LEP students. One counselor in particular felt that a student was erroneously diagnosed as learning disabled (LD) in the fall of 1992. This counselor was diligently encouraging the staff to allow the student more time to acquire language, especially CALP (Cummins, 1984). She knew he had received little education in his own country and that lack of formal schooling was not a handicapping condition that required a referral to the CSE.

The counselor talked over several strategies/courses of action with the writer. The counselor was going to seriously consider the new ESL component created by BETAC at

the Alternative High School. Thus she was willing to try many alternative educational plans (Garcia & Ortiz, 1988) in lieu of special education placement.

The writer's assistant also worked hard with another teacher who had taken the fall 1992 course on prereferral strategies and was currently in the winter 1993 course. The assistant performed an educational evaluation on a young adolescent from El Salvador. This boy had never been to school, but the classroom teacher sensed he was not of low intelligence.

The assistant/bilingual resource specialist discovered that without any formal schooling, this youngster could do simple math and reading. He also was able to grasp any new concept she presented to him as long as it was based on what he already knew. The assistant began with his rudimentary experimental base.

The assistant talked with the writer and the guidance counselor, and this small group decided that the new ESL component at the Alternative High School would facilitate the youngster's adjustment to school.

The assistant called the parents and met with them to tour the school. She also worked with the home school and the Alternative High School staff to plan an appropriate program. This BETAC assistant spent the first few days with the student to acquaint him with the school environment and culture.

The writer feels these two events are important to show what can be done in lieu of placement in special education. If a real handicap did manifest itself in the future, then appropriate assessment would follow. At that time the educators involved knew that simply being denied access to school in the home country was not a prerequisite for entry to a special education setting for a CLD student.

The writer had the opportunity to attend her state association's convention on bilingual education. While at the State Association of Bilingual Education's (SABE) convention, she attended a bilingual special education institute led by Dr. Else Hamayan whose works the writer has read and referenced in this report.

Dr. Hamayan spoke of not putting children in "boxes," i.e., attaching a label or category, albeit gifted and talented or limited English proficient. She implied that such labels often are accompanied by different methodologies and expectations from students by educators.

Dr. Hamayan seemed to be moving more toward a curriculum of inclusion for all learners. The writer will explore the notion of inclusion by reading the literature and attending workshops. If inclusion rather than "boxing" can be viewed as a successful prereferral strategy, why not offer inservice training in this area. This would be another way of practicum dissemination and professional growth for the writer.

Week Thirty-Four:

Consultant F held the last session of the writer's inservice training on prereferral strategies. Twenty-two out of 23 participants from session two returned to session three. The inservice credit and course content were believed by the writer to be the prime motivation to attend class on a Sunday.

The consultant used the SED guidelines (The University of the State of New York, 1990) in her presentation on the overaged LEP student. An overaged LEP student is one who enters the school system in the state/nation without any or little formal schooling from his/her native country.

This student, according to Consultant F and the SED guidelines (The University of the State of New York, 1990), has no familiarity with responsibilities assigned to other mainstream students by the LEA. His/her experiences may so differ from the students in the United States that he/she will be unable to do well on standardized testing. This is further complicated by how well the student speaks and understands English.

The culture he/she associated with in his/her own perfunctory level of education may vary greatly. The writer has witnessed CLD students seemingly of normal intelligence unable to follow simple texts in second grade spelling or use a standard notebook. They had never been exposed to these tasks. Yet educators were ready to label them as

somehow mentally deficient when all they needed was a sensitive and caring teacher who would take the time to explain instructions carefully and with accurate illustrations and/or use of the native language. Pairing children with those who speak their language and have been living in this country long enough to adjust to this culture does not impede the CLD learners but facilitates necessary communication, orientation to the new school culture, and development of skills in $L_1$ with which to acquire English.

Consultant F stressed that an orientation to the school setting, as the writer's assistant had done at the Alternative High School, helps such learners to adjust. A realia rich environment is also another way to create the experiential base this learner may lack.

The editors of the SED guidelines (The University of the State of New York, 1990) also recommend counseling and other support services provided by bilingual, bicultural professionals. Every effort to obtain support in the native language should be made available to the LEP students who lack formal educational experience from their native lands.

Consultant F conducted a very interesting session and concluded with a sampling of multicultural children's books. She also strongly emphasized the importance of joining professional organizations for the wealth of professional literature available.

The writer met with Spanish Teacher A to discuss her

Spanish for Communication course. The teacher and the writer, at the request of the course enrollees, planned a second series of 10 sessions labelled beginner/advanced beginner. These sessions would begin in summer 1993.

Spanish Teacher B spent her eighth and ninth sessions of Spanish for Professionals on dining out and communicating with the waiter. She and her class studied the menu of a local Mexican restaurant and dined there. Even though students knew very simple phrases, Spanish Teacher B encouraged them to use Spanish the entire evening. She told the writer that after almost nine weeks, the very shy were starting to say a few words. Spanish Teacher B and the writer discussed the fact that many LEP students do not speak for very long periods of time in their new setting. This is not a linguistic handicap, but a time when such students are listening and observing.

The writer, as a former foreign student exchange coordinator, always urged host families to be patient. The new guests/students were fatigued at the end of each day just from trying so hard to understand everything around them. Many would retire early each evening, not due to indifference, but real exhaustion. These students even came with some well developed skills in English as compared to the CLD students and their families who come here in order to live better. Foreign exchange students are considered intelligent, whereas many CLD students are categorized,

i.e., "boxed," and denied access to all learning opportunities.

Week Thirty-Five:

This last week of practicum implementation allowed the writer time to reflect on outcomes. Spanish Teacher B held her last class on Spanish for Professionals. She had obtained two videos from a Spanish teacher in a local high school. One video reviewed greetings and the other foods. Students could understand almost all dialogue presented on the videos. Though they could not speak as fluently as the native speakers on the video, they were able to use simple phrases. Only one teacher out of eight had had previous training in the Spanish language. The others felt that they had indeed mastered some phrases they could use.

The following day, one of the ESL teachers in the course excitedly called Spanish Teacher B to tell her that she had a new Mexican boy who spoke no English. The ESL teacher used some Spanish phrases Spanish Teacher B had taught her and was able to make the new student feel comfortable. Thus the ESL teacher had created a relaxed environment for this student and was also proud of her new linguistic ability.

Spanish Teacher B, the writer's assistant, was invited by the coordinator of the migrant program to attend a Hispanic parent meeting in the home of one of the parents. The purpose of the meeting for the migrant program

coordinator was to teach parenting skills to the CLD parents.

The writer's assistant told the writer that meetings at parents' homes please them. They prepare snacks and really buy into a program since they are on their own turf and do their own arrangements beforehand. The meeting's focus was on helping the CLD student to cope with the new culture in the school and community.

Parents were also given materials in Spanish to read before the next meeting. The writer will work with the migrant program coordinator to help plan an SED project for multilingual, multicultural parents for the following fiscal year.

By the week's close, the writer had collected the remaining data in support of her original outcomes outlined in chapter III of this practicum report. She spent time reviewing the outcomes and planned for their graphic presentation in chapter V.

# CHAPTER V

## RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The goal of the practicum was to provide inservice training to educators working with limited English proficient students. The ultimate aim of such training was that these language minority students would no longer be inappropriately referred to the Committee on Special Education and thus incorrectly placed in classes for handicapped youngsters. The writer also provided training in the Spanish language to help educators and other agency personnel to more effectively communicate with the large Hispanic population in her catchment area. These minority children were more apt to be referred than other language minority students. Parental seminars were also part of this major practicum. It was planned that by helping parents to make the home school connection, such parents would open the lines of communication with children's teachers so that teachers better understood the culturally and linguistically diverse child.

Finally, the writer disseminated statewide and nationwide the first draft of a booklet on prereferral strategies with the aim that educators would implement suggested strategies, consult the suggested references,

and/or seek more training. Thus the writer's goal of preventing LEP youngsters from being misplaced in special education settings was viewed with utmost importance by her as she initiated and implemented varied major objectives.

## Results

The results of the practicum were drawn from attendance records used at parent meetings (see Appendix E) and responses to questionnaires (see Appendices G-K). The questionnaires were the writer's measurement of results for the inservice courses on prereferral strategies, the Spanish language courses, and the first draft of her booklet on prereferral strategies. The writer designed all questionnaires. The attendance sign in sheets used at the parental seminars served as the instrument to evaluate the success of such meetings.

The writer's first major outcome was to provide inservice training to ESL teachers, mainstream classroom teachers, special educators, and other school personnel who worked with LEP youngsters. She hoped that such educators would increase their abilities to differentiate between a suspected handicap and a linguistic, cultural, or socioeconomic diversity. It was hoped that 12 out of a projected enrollment of 15 course participants were going to be able to feel more comfortable in referring a LEP student or deciding to withhold such a referral.

A questionnaire for this fall 1992 inservice course (see Appendix G) contained 36 items. The writer originally intended to have more than 36 items on this questionnaire. However, as she constructed this measurement instrument for her first outcome, 36 items sufficiently covered the course content on prereferral strategies.

The 36 items were seen by her as strategies teachers could implement. If a course participant answered Yes to a strategy, that was an indication to the writer that such participant was able to implement that strategy and/or to apply positively the knowledge acquired. A No showed the writer that a participant did not acquire enough knowledge to implement a plan of action or strategy that might prevent an inappropriate referral of a language minority youngster. The N/A response was an indication that such question was not applicable to that participant's work setting.

The enrollment in the writer's fall inservice course on prereferral strategies began with 20 educators in late October 1992. Fourteen of these educators completed the course and received inservice credit. Only two participants were ESL teachers, two were counselors/psychologists responsible for the LEP students in their buildings, and the remainder were mainstream classroom teachers and special educators. The writer used a histogram to measure their responsiveness to the success of the course.

The writer wished to have three quarters of these

participants, i.e., 11 out of 14 enrollees, respond positively to two thirds of the questions posed on the questionnaire, i.e., 24 out of 36 questions.

The histogram shown in Figure 1 presents evidence that all course enrollees responded positively to more than 24 questions posed. In fact, 14 enrollees responded positively 31 or more times to the writer's questions.

Due to the success of the writer's first inservice course on prereferral strategies, a second session was held in the late winter and early spring of 1993. Three Saturdays were chosen between January and March 1993. The course began with 29 participants and ended with 22 completing the course for credit. These 22 educators completed the evaluation forms designed by the writer (see Appendix H). Again the writer wished to have 17 out of the 22 course participants, i.e., three fourths, respond positively to two thirds of the questions posed on the survey, i.e., 17 out of 20 questions.

The writer used the same criteria for success as she did in the fall 1992 course. A Yes indicated the educator had gained knowledge of the strategy/item and would implement or was implementing such strategy. A No answer demonstrated that the participant felt insufficient knowledge was presented in this area, and finally, a N/A response indicated that such item was not applicable to the enrollees' work situation.

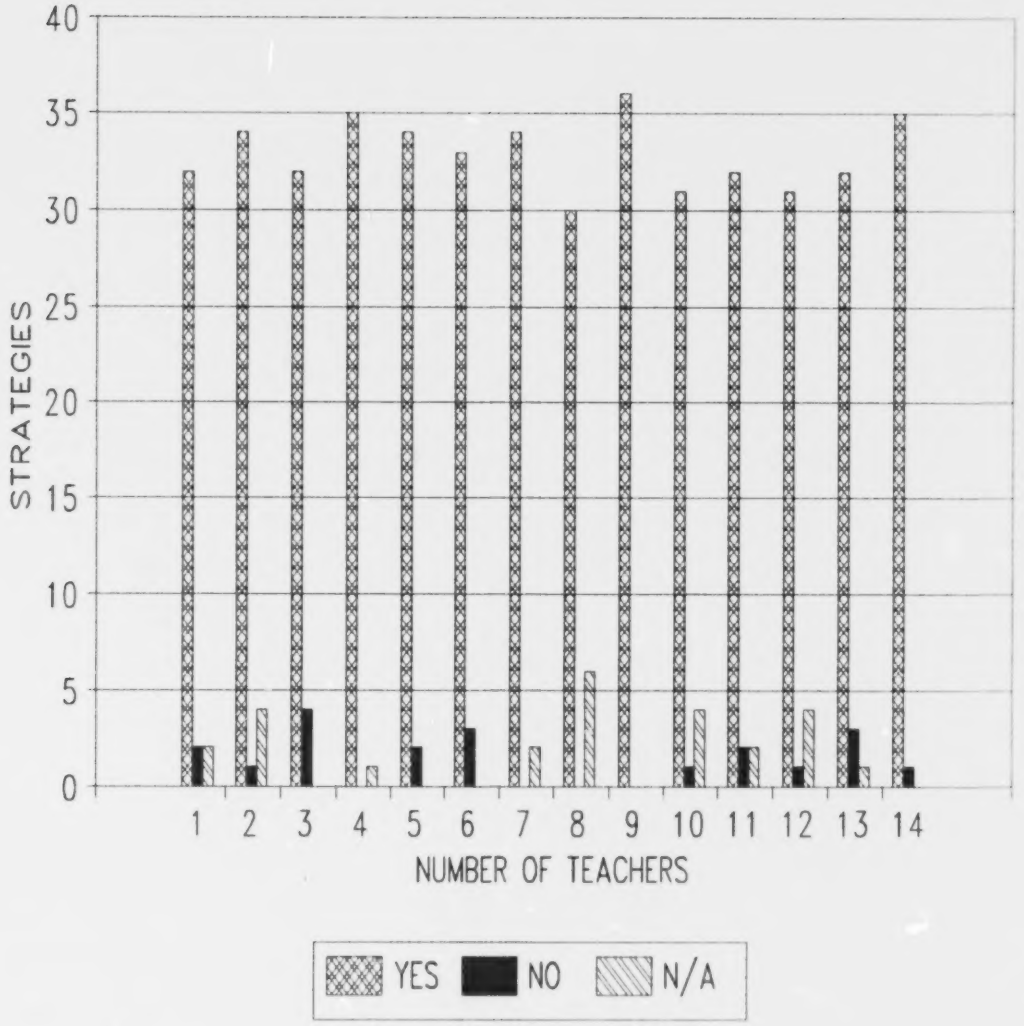


**Figure 1**

Depiction of Results of Fall 1992 Training:
Strategies/Responses vs. Number of Teachers

The histogram shown in Figure 2 demonstrates that all but 2 participants responded positively to more than 17 items. In sum, the remaining 20 participants reacted positively to 17 or more of the 20 items designed by the writer. Indeed, the second session, as did the first, seemed to be received positively by course enrollees. The writer's aim of offering training to reduce inappropriate referrals of LEP students for testing and probable placement in special education settings did, according to practicum measurements and evaluation, experience success.

The writer can only give an educated guess as to why two enrollees did not respond with a Yes to the posed questions 17 or more times. Questionnaires are answered anonymously so the writer does not know who answers the questionnaire unless the information is volunteered.

Perhaps those educators who did not work in a classroom situation with LEP youngsters could not apply all knowledge taught. There were nurses enrolled in the course as well as social workers. Perhaps even other educators, such as the foreign language teacher or home economics teacher, did not see a need to use all strategies presented.

One of these 2 participants stated on her evaluation form that as many as 5 strategies were not applicable to her work situation, and the other stated that she could not or would not use 5 strategies. She responded with a No 5 times and a N/A 4 times.

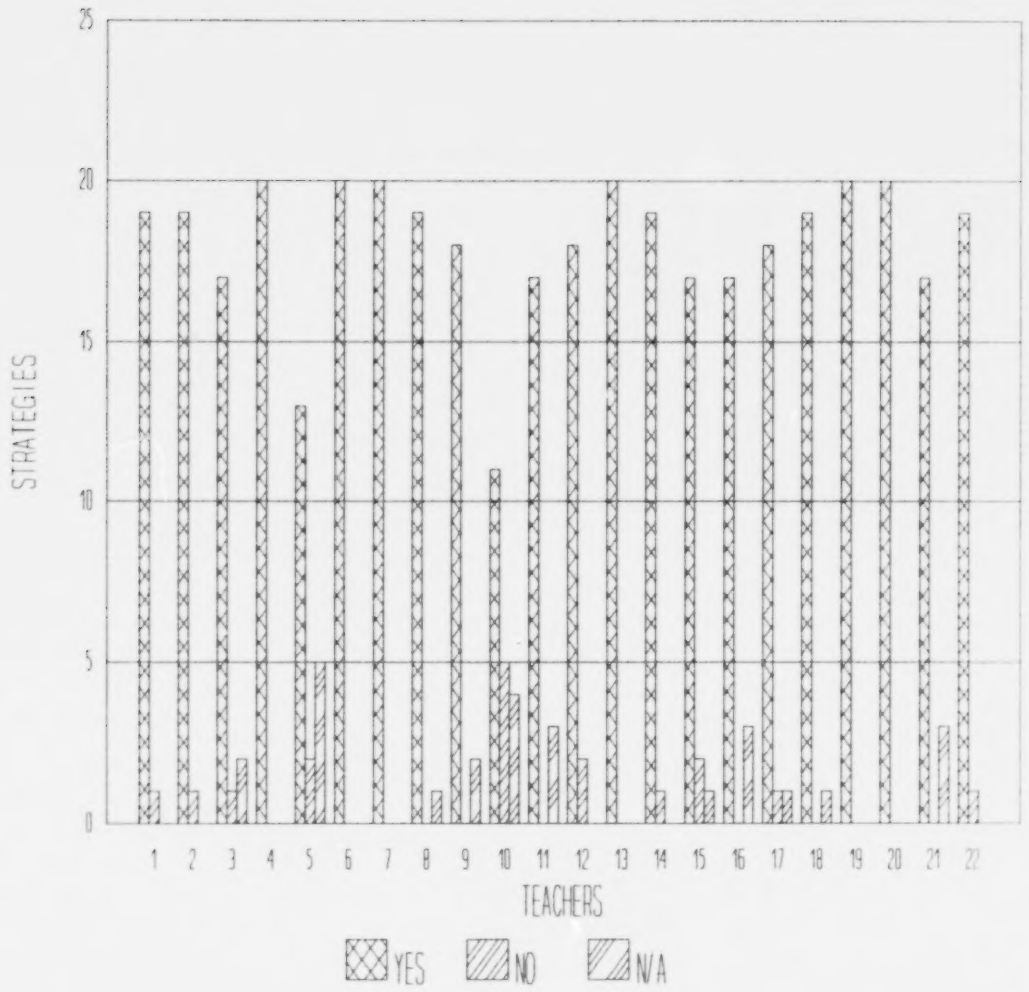


**Figure 2**

Depiction of Results of Winter 1993 Training:
Strategies/Responses vs. Number of Teachers

The second outcome was to have those who worked with Hispanic students and their families develop skills in basic communication in the Spanish language. Due to the demand for such courses, two sections were held.

One course, Spanish for Professionals, was designed for teachers. In lieu of measuring participants' development of language proficiency, a very subjective measurement that would vary by personal need, previous experience, or even instructor bias, the writer used a more general questionnaire (see Appendix I).

Of the 8 participants enrolled in Spanish for Professionals, the writer hoped that 6 out of 8, again three-fourths of the participants, would answer all questions by choosing a 4 or a 5. A choice of 4 or 5 indicated to the writer that a participant experienced some success in acquisition of simple phrases in the Spanish language. The results of the training are shown in Table 1.

| | Rating: | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| QUESTIONS | I | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | II | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | II | 7 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | IV | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | V | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**Table 1**

Depiction of Results of Training in the Spanish Language Spanish for Professionals

A rating of 5 indicates the highest degree of satisfaction with the training and a rating of 1 indicates the lowest.

The questions on the evaluation instrument are as follows:

I. The language taught met your professional needs.

II. The methods of instruction facilitated acquisition of simple phrases in the language.

III. The materials presented were useful to you as a language learner.

IV. The instructor was well prepared and varied her delivery according to topic and/or need.

V. The instructor actively engaged all participants in language activities.

All 8 participants in the Spanish for Professionals course were very pleased with the course. Eight of them answered the 5 questions either by choosing a 5 or a 4. No question received a rating of 3 or less.

A second Spanish course, Spanish for Communication, cosponsored by the writer's office and the town, involved town workers whose job descriptions kept them in almost daily contact with Hispanic residents. The course began with 22 enrollees and ended with 12 who partook of all 10 sessions and completed the same generalized evaluation form the writer used for the Spanish for Professionals course (see Appendix I).

The writer hoped that out of the 12 enrollees completing the course, three fourths would experience a modicum of success with the language, i.e., 9 out of 12.

The results in Table 2 show that all 12 participants, i.e., town workers, rated the course by choosing a 5 or a 4 on the 5 items presented in the questionnaire. None gave any item a rating of 3 or lower.

| | Rating: | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| QUESTIONS | I | 5 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | II | 10 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | II | 11 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | IV | 12 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | V | 9 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**Table 2**

Depiction of Results of Training in the Spanish Language

Spanish for Communication

Thus, the writer's aim of allowing for acquisition of simple phrases in Spanish by course enrollees seemed to meet with success by town workers as well as educators.

The third outcome was for the educators in the writer's catchment area and other educators statewide to have a source of prereferral strategies as a result of the writer's publication of her first rough draft on this topic. The writer's first draft was not only disseminated regionally and statewide, but also nationwide to educators in all fields.

Five hundred sixteen copies of the writer's booklet on prereferral strategies were mailed to members of different professional organizations and other educators across the nation. The booklet is entitled "Intervention Strategies for the Education of the Linguistic and Culturally Diverse Student: A Proactive Approach to Prevent Inappropriate Referrals of Potential English Speakers to Special Education Settings." With each mailing, the writer included an introductory letter, the booklet, an evaluation form (see Appendix K), and a stamped self-addressed envelope.

The writer had planned on a follow-up reminder letter to those who did not return the enclosed evaluation form. However, by the close of the project, 317 out of 516 evaluations were returned. In sum, 61.4% of contacted educators deemed the work significant and returned the completed evaluations. Many sent personal notes to the

writer along with positive comments and comments for improvement. Table 3 shows the results of respondents' replies to the questionnaire evaluating the information provided in her booklet.

| Likert Scale | 1 Strongly Disagree | 2 Somewhat Disagree | 3 No Opinion | 4 Somewhat Agree | 5 Strongly Agree | Total Educators Surveyed |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| QUESTIONS 1 | 24 | 43 | 16 | 142 | 92 | 317 |
| 2 | 9 | 4 | 8 | 96 | 200 | 317 |
| 3 | 16 | 3 | 5 | 33 | 260 | 317 |
| 4 | 16 | 4 | 2 | 36 | 259 | 317 |
| 5 | 11 | 4 | 9 | 59 | 234 | 317 |
| 6 | 9 | 8 | 9 | 70 | 221 | 317 |

**Table 3**

Responses to Questionnaire of the Writer's Booklet

Questions:

1. The booklet provides strategies that mainstream classroom teachers can implement.

2. The assessment process of LEP students is stressed as a complex process.

3. The total assessment process is an important determinant as to whether a CLD student truly has a handicap.

4. The role of the parents of LEP students cannot be overlooked.

5. The role of administration is seen as vital to the success of LEP students.

6. Training of interpreters/translators cannot be ignored.

The writer hoped that of the 317 educators who replied to the survey, at least three-quarters, i.e., 238 of them, would have found the information in the booklet to be helpful and respond favorably. A choice of Somewhat Agree (#4) or Strongly Agree (#5) were considered positive replies by the writer.

Question 1, which asked the respondents if the booklet provided strategies that could be implemented by mainstream teachers, received a rating of Somewhat Agree and Strongly Agree by 234 respondents. The figure is slightly lower than the standard set by the writer.

Question 2, which focused on the presentation by the writer that assessment of LEP students is a complex process, received a rating of Somewhat Agree and Strongly Agree by 296 educators. The third question asking if the booklet stressed the assessment process as an important determinant of a handicap received a score of 290 from those who agreed somewhat and those who agreed strongly.

Parents' roles received a combined score of 295 once again on the Somewhat Agree and Strongly Agree categories. On these two categories, i.e., #4 and #5 on the Likert scale used by the writer, the role of administrators to the success of LEP students received a combined score of 293, and the last question concerning the training of interpreters/translators received a score of 291.

The writer was pleased with the results, and the table

presented indicates the booklet experienced success in its first draft. Comments from those surveyed will be discussed in the next section. Many were positive, but some educators did indicate where they believed information was lacking. The first question on the provision of strategies that mainstream teachers could implement received many written comments. Educators surveyed, although they liked the strategies presented, wanted more. They felt the writer needed to include more specifics as she outlined her strategies to prevent inappropriate referrals.

The last outcome implemented for this project involved Hispanic parents of school aged children in the writer's target area. The writer intended to hold parental seminars to help parents become involved in their children's schooling. The seminars were held after the Spanish Mass on Sunday evenings. The writer used an attendance sheet (see Appendix E) to keep a record of attendance. She set a goal of maintaining 20 or more attendees at these meetings.

During the project period, four Hispanic parental seminars were held. Table 4 shows the dates and the numbers in attendance according to the attendance rosters.

| DATE | PARENTS IN ATTENDANCE |
|---|---|
| October 25, 1992 | 25 |
| November 22, 1992 | 15 |
| December 13, 1992 | 9 |
| February 28, 1993 | 8 |

**Table 4**

Dates and Numbers of Parents at Hispanic Parental Seminars

The writer's parental seminar did not experience the success she hoped for. In spite of extensive outreach to advertise the seminars in English and Spanish, the numbers per seminar declined. The writer always had the interest of those who attended and hopes to work with her steering committee on an SED initiative for language minority parents after the practicum project. At least her steering committee had remained interested throughout the project duration.

The writer does not consider these results to be a failure, but a strong indication that a more novel approach needs to be used with these families. She will discuss why she believes the approach utilized was not the best and what she hopes to do in the future in the next sections of this

report.

As stated earlier, the writer's efforts were hampered by a "noreaster" in December, a failure to open the church school after the Spanish Mass in November, and the refusal of some consultants to travel to the rural communities the writer's BETAC office serves. Even the evening church services held on Sundays were not favored by Hispanic families. Thus, the writer believes that her program could have worked under other circumstances, and she knows she has not lost the trust of the Hispanic community.

## Discussion

The writer feels that this practicum did experience success. The first inservice training on prereferral strategies (fall 1992) was deemed successful by all course participants. The enthusiasm expressed by course participants for the consultant surprised the writer. This consultant is an excellent teacher trainer; however, the course enrollees encouraged her to consider teaching methodology courses at local colleges and universities since they felt all teachers, future teachers, and administrators should be exposed to this training.

The 14 educators completing the course had taken various methodology courses per their respective disciplines. However, none felt that what they had previously learned could compare to the practicality of the

strategies presented by the consultant. They indicated to the writer that current methodology courses do not get to the heart of what really happens in the class and what can be done to ameliorate the situation. These enrollees believed that the writer's fall 1992 training on prereferral strategies presented cost effective, easy to implement methods for all educators. The writer was thanked by most enrollees for designing and implementing the course.

The second course on prereferral strategies was created by the writer since she realized more in depth training in this area was an urgent need. Thus the three Saturday inservice training courses were designed and implemented.

The second inservice training on the at risk LEP student/prereferral strategies (winter 1993) was also enthusiastically received. Most enrollees were not second language educators and thus were freshmen to this kind of training.

The results previously presented indicate that growth did occur during the 15-hour training. The enrolled educators understood the nature of bilingual education and the methodologies for success with LEP youngsters. They were cognizant of why acquisition of BICS and CALP (Cummins, 1984) are necessary prerequisites to success in academic school settings. They told the writer they were more sensitized to the needs of LEP students as a result of this training. Previously they had very little knowledge of SED

regulations, proper assessment, or strategies with which to work successfully with the LEP youngsters.

At least 10 of the course participants wrote on the evaluation forms that they would advocate implementation of learned prereferral strategies by educators in their home schools. Working with teams (Garcia & Ortiz, 1988) in lieu of referring was also an option some wished to put in place in their own LEAs.

The three consultants who taught the course were received warmly by educators. Once again the writer was thanked for bringing this training to all educators and not just teachers of English as a Second Language.

In sum, enrollees in both the fall 1992 and winter 1993 courses would like to see this training continued as indicated by notes to the writer on the evaluation instruments. The writer is already making plans for the next fiscal year and for one major presenter before the close of this school year.

The Spanish language courses were especially welcomed in the writer's catchment area. Of the 8 teachers enrolled in Spanish for Professionals and the 22 completing Spanish for Communication, only one had previously studied Spanish. In speaking with the instructors and again in reading comments on the course evaluations, the writer felt that acquisition of Spanish as a Second Language (SSL) was in its initial stages of development for both groups, i.e.,

teachers and town workers.

The town and BETAC had already disseminated flyers for the next Spanish for Communication course which was going to begin in May 1993. Spanish Teacher B's teachers asked her to run an intensive Spanish for Professionals course during the summer. Spanish Teacher B contacted the cosponsoring teachers' center, and thus her planning was underway. Her course was also going to be a continuation of her first training. Like Spanish Teacher A's, it would be held for beginners/advanced beginners.

Thus the writer was satisfied that growth in the Spanish language had occurred as a result of her training courses. All but one participant had had no knowledge of Spanish and all enrollees completed their coursework with a repertoire of simple phrases to use in their everyday encounters with the Hispanic community. Even the one educator who has previously studied Spanish was given more advanced work by the instructor. Thus she too acknowledged increased proficiency in the Spanish language.

The writer's booklet on prereferral strategies, "Intervention Strategies for the Education of the Linguistic and Culturally Diverse Student: A Proactive Approach to Prevent Inappropriate Referrals of Potential English Speakers to Special Education Settings," received numerous positive comments. Almost half of those on the writer's mailing list were teachers of English as a Second Language

and the remainder were mainstream educators.

The ESL professional, as well as the mainstream educators, were fully cognizant that LEP students were erroneously placed in special education classes. They described the writer's work as "timely." Many shared the work with other teachers in their building and/or principals. Others requested the final revised and published edition, a task the writer will undertake after her Nova studies are completed.

Many of those who returned the evaluation form encouraged the writer to include more classroom/prereferral strategies. The writer's intent was to present an overview with reference materials for the interested reader. She is producing a booklet, not a book. Only a small handful of educators read the introductory letter carefully and fully understood the writer's outcome. However, the suggestions made by the many readers will not be ignored by the writer as she works to eventually have this document professionally published.

The writer feels that the positive evaluations, i.e., the Somewhat Agree and Strongly Agree categories of Table 3, outweigh the negatives. Therefore, she can conclude from written comments, telephone calls, and evaluation forms that the booklet is of use to educators who realize the problem of inappropriate referrals of CLD students for testing and special education classes is growing and needs the

appropriate remediation.

The Hispanic parent seminars did not attract the attention of a sufficient number of parents. The writer has come to realize that Sunday evenings were not the best time, even though many parents were not working at that time. Also, many Hispanics do not attend the Sunday evening services though they are in Spanish.

The coordinator of the migrant program expects to have more success by meeting in the home of the parents. The one meeting she had seems to indicate that this remedy may work.

The writer plans to stay in close touch with her parent steering committee to plan for an SED initiative for the upcoming fiscal year. This new program encourages parents' attendance by creating weekend training sessions away from home for a select few who will become trainers of trainers in their home communities. Those who come for the weekend training and other follow-up sessions receive a stipend. SED initiated a pilot project this year which seems to be successful and thus has encouraged BETAC coordinators to include this project in their 1993-1994 proposal. This writer fully plans to do so.

Those few parents who did attend the Hispanic parent seminars enjoyed the speakers and thanked the writer and her assistant for their efforts. At least these parents were more aware of their LEA, the importance of staying in touch with school officials, their children's physical, cognitive,

social, and emotional growth, and the importance of due rights if their child is being referred for testing to determine if there is a handicap. They further know that the BETAC office staff continues to be and will always be an advocate for them.

Thus, while this outcome did not experience the success hoped for by the writer, she at least has the attention and cooperation of her steering committee. This committee will help her to launch the SED initiative on parent training.

## Recommendations

The writer knows that her work on this major practicum left a lasting impact on educators, community members, and parents involved. However, there are many more teachers, community members, and language minority parents who would have benefitted from this training.

The writer believes it is time for some of those already trained to become turnkey trainers. She envisions teachers teaching administrators and teachers in their home schools at faculty meetings and conference days. She envisions bilingual parents hosting meetings without the help of the BETAC office though at present she will keep parent projects alive through her office and SED initiatives.

Before the close of the 1992-1993 school year, the writer will hold an open meeting and invite all educators

who took part in her training to attend. She will talk about the importance of becoming a trainer of trainers and offer technical assistance to interested teachers so that they can begin the 1993-1994 school year as leaders/trainers in the area of ESL methodologies, second language acquisition theories, and in general, strategies related to the field of bilingual education and bilingual special education.

The writer has already contracted with Dr. Nancy Cloud of Hofstra University, a specialist in the field of bilingual education and referenced throughout this report. Nancy will offer a three hour workshop to the administrators and teachers in the writer's area on what constitutes an ecological assessment. The writer hopes to continue this training in the fall through course offerings and special workshops to be headed by Dr. Baca of the University of Colorado and Dr. Else Hamayan of the Illinois Resource Center. Both renowned professionals have indicated their willingness to work with the writer and the administrators and teachers in the BETAC catchment area. Thus teachers and administrators who attend these sessions will have the opportunity to train others back in their home schools. This is one recommendation the writer is making as a result of this project, and she knows it is an important one.

Lastly, the writer will encourage other teachers' centers in her catchment area to keep on offering

communication courses in Spanish. Now that the BETAC office has created two courses, two model curricula are in place.

## Dissemination

It is most important that the writer continue to communicate with mainstream teachers if inappropriate referrals to special education classes for LEP students are to decline. As stated earlier, she fully intends to revise her first draft of her booklet on prereferral strategies and to seek a publisher. This booklet can be attractively bound and sold inexpensively at local and statewide conferences, not only in the field of bilingual education but in other disciplines as well. Thus the writer aims to professionally publish and therefore disseminate this booklet.

She also plans to begin a consulting business once her Nova studies are completed. She knows this field best and will have the time to be an advocate for language minority students and their families through education of members of the majority culture and language. Thus she can take her work out of her catchment area as her reputation and expertise in bilingual education, special education, and bilingual special education continue to expand. She will seek to train new teachers and teachers to be at the university level, and she will make an earnest effort to reach the educators studying to be school administrators. A school leader in the late twentieth and early twenty-first

century needs to be cognizant of the demographic changes and their impact on schools, children, and communities. Administrators and teachers must be prepared to handle the changing colors in the classrooms in the last decade of this century.

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# APPENDIX A

## SURVEY (ENGLISH VERSION) USED BY THE WRITER'S OFFICE AS A NEEDS ASSESSMENT IN APRIL 1992

## SURVEY (ENGLISH VERSION) USED BY THE WRITER'S OFFICE AS A NEEDS ASSESSMENT IN APRIL 1992

BOCES I Bilingual Education Technical Assistance Center (BETAC) is interested in meeting the needs of our Hispanic families. Please take a few minutes to answer these questions.

---

(CIRCLE YES OR NO)

As a parent do you try to maintain contact with your children's teachers? YES NO

If the answer is no, could you tell us why?

---

Does your child's school contact you in Spanish and/or English . . .

- If there is a special meeting? YES NO
- If there is a problem? YES NO
- For parent teacher conferences? YES NO
- For local Parent Teacher Association meetings? YES NO

---

Is your local community able to provide services in Spanish and English? YES NO

---

Are there bilingual medical personnel in your local community? YES NO

---

SURVEY (ENGLISH VERSION) USED BY THE WRITER'S OFFICE AS A NEEDS ASSESSMENT IN APRIL 1992 (CONTINUED)

As a parent, would you like to know more about children's . . .

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| - Health? | YES | NO |
| - Child abuse laws? | YES | NO |
| - AIDS? | YES | NO |
| - Drug and alcohol abuse? | YES | NO |

---

If a program of monthly speakers who could provide information on topics/answer questions were provided, would you attend? YES NO

---

What topics would you like to know more about?

---

What BOCES services would you like to see provided?

---

Is more information on amnesty needed? YES NO

---

SURVEY (ENGLISH VERSION) USED BY THE WRITER'S OFFICE AS A NEEDS ASSESSMENT IN APRIL 1992 (CONTINUED)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Do you fully understand the school system in this country? | YES | NO |

---

These answers will be kept confidential. You do not have to sign your name. We will do our best to accommodate your needs.

# APPENDIX B

## SURVEY DISSEMINATED IN SEPTEMBER 1991 TO DETERMINE THE QUALITY OF BETAC SERVICES

SURVEY DISSEMINATED IN SEPTEMBER 1991
TO DETERMINE THE QUALITY OF BETAC SERVICES

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please respond to the following statements by circling the number that reflects your opinion.

---

1. Have staff development activities been helpful in implementing instructional strategies with LEP students?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| strongly disagree | somewhat disagree | no opinion | somewhat agree | strongly agree |

---

2. Has the BETAC office provided sufficient awareness and technical assistance on funding sources on the state and federal level?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| strongly disagree | somewhat disagree | no opinion | somewhat agree | strongly agree |

---

3. Are you satisfied with the level of technical assistance provided by the BETAC office via telephone contact, mailings and on site visitation?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| strongly disagree | somewhat disagree | no opinion | somewhat agree | strongly agree |

---

4. Has the BETAC office readily assisted your program in obtaining translators and interpreters?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| strongly disagree | somewhat disagree | no opinion | somewhat agree | strongly agree |

---

5. Is the resource library sufficient to cover the needs of school personnel who access the library?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| strongly disagree | somewhat disagree | no opinion | somewhat agree | strongly agree |

---

SURVEY DISSEMINATED IN SEPTEMBER 1991
TO DETERMINE THE QUALITY OF BETAC SERVICES
(CONTINUED)

6. Has sufficient training been provided on the assessment of LEP students?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| strongly disagree | somewhat disagree | no opinion | somewhat agree | strongly agree |

---

7. Have parental support/liaison activities been useful to the community serviced by your district?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| strongly disagree | somewhat disagree | no opinion | somewhat agree | strongly agree |

---

Completed by: _____

Position held: _____

# APPENDIX C

## RESOLUTION OF HISPANIC STUDENTS AT THE HISPANIC YOUTH LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

RESOLUTION OF HISPANIC STUDENTS AT THE
HISPANIC YOUTH LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

# RESOLUTION
# FOR PRESENTATION AT
# HISPANIC YOUTH LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

## WHEREAS:

It has been determined in New York State that language minority students are deprived of opportunities for personal growth and development due to the misunderstanding by the mainstream educators of the difficulties in acquiring a second language and the display of cultural insensitivity by members of the more dominant culture. Barriers to success of most ESL students lie within the domain of Institutions of Higher Education and the teacher certification requirements. Furthermore, other barriers that permit misunderstanding of the needs of limited English proficient students lie within the purview of local Educational Agencies.

## BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The New York State Legislature take action to increase the courses for study at Institutions of Higher Education to include two years of study of a foreign language with the result that all educators will realize the difficulties associated with learning a second language. Educators must also be required by mandates of the Legislative body to take a course in multiculturalism; thereby increasing these educators' sensitivity to the unique and diverse culturally significant behavior exhibited in the classroom by limited English proficient students. The New York State Legislature has to impose mandates for staff development which will include language immersion weekends and multicultural sensitivity for all educators in Local Educational Agencies. Be it resolved that the New York State Legislature address these issues so that all students are provided equal access to develop to their fullest potential.

# APPENDIX D

## QUESTIONNAIRE COMPLETED BY PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS AT THE END OF PRACTICUM ONE

QUESTIONNAIRE COMPLETED BY PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS
AT THE END OF PRACTICUM ONE

Are you aware of the regulations from the State Education Department Division of Bilingual Education and Office for the Education of Children With Handicapping Conditions concerning appropriate placement of LEP children who have a handicap?

Yes _____ No _____

Have you seen the SED publication, Guidelines for Services to Students with Limited English Proficiency and Special Education Needs in New York State?

Yes _____ No _____

Are there more referrals than is necessary of LEP children to CSE committees?

Yes _____ No _____

Are more children than is necessary inappropriately placed in special education classes?

Yes _____ No _____

Are you aware of when students should not be considered as handicapped, i.e., LEP students?

Yes _____ No _____

Are you aware of prereferral strategies that an educator can employ prior to initiating a referral to insure that everything possible has been done to avoid an unnecessary referral?

Yes _____ No _____

Are bilingual personnel adequately trained to assess a possible handicapped student?

Yes _____ No _____

Are they readily available?

Yes _____ No _____

Would a Spanish "survival" course help the educators of LEP students in their efforts to communicate with students and families?

Yes _____ No _____

# APPENDIX E

## SAMPLE ATTENDANCE RECORD TO BE USED AT PARENT MEETINGS

SAMPLE ATTENDANCE RECORD
TO BE USED AT PARENT MEETINGS

EVENT: _____ DATE: _____

ATTENDANCE RECORD

NAME _____

# APPENDIX F

## HISTOGRAM: FIGURE 3 DEPICTION OF TRAINING: STRATEGY/RESPONSE VS. NUMBER OF TEACHERS

HISTOGRAM: FIGURE 3 DEPICTION OF TRAINING:
STRATEGY/RESPONSE VS. NUMBER OF TEACHERS

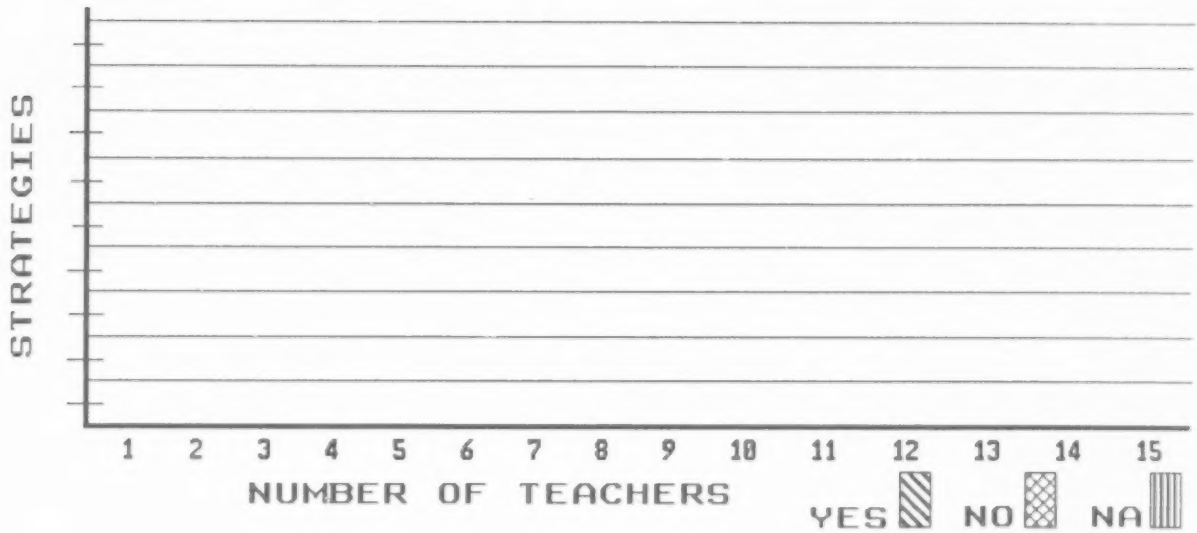


**Figure 3**

Depiction of Training: Strategy/Response vs. Number of Teachers

Numbers: 1 through 15 represent possible number of inservice participants.

# APPENDIX G

## EVALUATION OF FALL 1992 INSERVICE TRAINING ON PREREFERRAL STRATEGIES

## EVALUATION OF FALL 1992 INSERVICE TRAINING ON PREREFERRAL STRATEGIES

| QUESTION | YES | NO | NA |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. State regulations for the education of limited English proficient students are understood. | | | |
| 2. State regulations for the LEP student who may be handicapped do serve as useful guidelines. | | | |
| 3. The components of an English as a Second Language and bilingual education program are understood. | | | |
| 4. The differences between bilingual education and bilingual special education were adequately explained. | | | |
| 5. The role of the BETAC office was adequately presented. | | | |
| 6. This introduction to the course provided useful information. | | | |
| 7. The importance of assessment, formal and informal, clarified problematic areas in the education/evaluation of limited English proficient students. | | | |
| 8. The explanation of an ecological assessment which includes all variables that can impact on a LEP student's performance has provided information of which educators need to be cognizant. | | | |
| 9. Some of the formal and informal assessment strategies presented in the course are doable in the educator's present work setting. | | | |
| 10. The educator understands the importance of a bilingual multidisciplinary evaluation team. | | | |
| 11. The educator knows how to access such personnel. | | | |
| 12. The maintaining of a portfolio for measuring student growth can be put in place by educators. | | | |
| 13. The importance of using portfolios was adequately stressed throughout the course. | | | |
| 14. Process writing as a method to encourage student growth and self esteem is a strategy that can be initiated by educators. | | | |

| | QUESTION | YES | NO | NA |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15. | Process writing is clearly understood as a prereferral strategy. | | | |
| 16. | Collaboration, i.e., working with student teams, is a method educators can implement in their local schools. | | | |
| 17. | The importance of cooperative learning techniques for the success of LEP students was adequately explained. | | | |
| 18. | Whole language techniques are more clearly understood as proactive strategies which can raise student self esteem. | | | |
| 19. | Educators feel confident in initiating whole language strategies in their home schools. | | | |
| 20. | Materials for process writing, whole language, and cooperative learning are easily accessible to educators. | | | |
| 21. | The arrangement of the classroom for the facilitation of learning by the LEP student can be accomplished by educators. | | | |
| 22. | The total classroom ambiance is conducive to successful learning experiences. | | | |
| 23. | Games, hands on experiences, songs, chants, poems, and play are part of the educator's repertoire of strategies for student success at all grade levels. | | | |
| 24. | A realia rich environment can be observed in the educator's classroom. | | | |
| 25. | The importance of working with parents is fully understood. | | | |
| 26. | Efforts to reach parents through interpreters or through the BETAC staff can be put in place by educators. | | | |
| 27. | The important role of interpreters is understood. | | | |
| 28. | Educators are able to orient the newly arrived non-English speaking student to the existing school culture. | | | |
| 29. | The importance of creating an experiential base for students who lack formal schooling experiences can be more easily facilitated by educators. | | | |

| | QUESTION | YES | NO | NA |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 30. | The teaching of higher order thinking skills is able to be accomplished by educators in Grades K-12. | | | |
| 31. | The educator is more aware that linguistic diversity does not equate to linguistic deficit. | | | |
| 32. | Linguistic and cultural diversity are seen as a creative means to teaching tolerance. | | | |
| 33. | Cultural diversity is viewed by educators as diversity, not deficit. | | | |
| 34. | Educators are able to work as a team in the home school to devise a program of studies that will help LEP students with little formal schooling to succeed. | | | |
| 35. | Educators are more cognizant and sensitive to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students. | | | |
| 36. | Such students are less apt to be referred due to the knowledge presented in this course. | | | |

# APPENDIX H

## EVALUATION OF WINTER 1993 INSERVICE TRAINING ON PREREFERRAL STRATEGIES

EVALUATION OF WINTER 1993 INSERVICE
TRAINING ON PREREFERRAL STRATEGIES

**The At Risk LEP Student**

Please circle **Yes** if the strategy or item taught will be used or is currently in use in your classroom or work setting.

Please circle **No** if you are not going to employ the taught strategy or item.

Please circle **N/A** if such items do not pertain to your line of work.

1. Knowledge of New York State regulations in the education of LEP students is useful.

Yes No N/A

---

2. Definition of terms has clarified the distinction between ESL and bilingual education.

Yes No N/A

---

3. The linguistic ability of beginning second language learners is a factor of which all teachers must be aware.

Yes No N/A

---

4. Knowledge of how students acquire language is useful to educators.

Yes No N/A

---

5. The distinction between BICS and CALP, as defined by Cummins (1984), clarifies how students acquire language.

Yes No N/A

---

6. The importance of assessment, formal and informal, clarified problematic areas in the education/evaluation of limited English proficient students.

Yes No N/A

## EVALUATION OF WINTER 1993 INSERVICE TRAINING ON PREREFERRAL STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)

7. Some of the classroom strategies presented in the course are doable in the educator's present work setting.

Yes No N/A

8. The educator understands the importance of a bilingual multidisciplinary evaluation team.

Yes No N/A

9. The educator knows how to access such personnel.

Yes No N/A

10. The educator is more aware that linguistic diversity does not equate to linguistic deficit.

Yes No N/A

11. Linguistic and cultural diversity are seen as creative means to teaching tolerance.

Yes No N/A

12. Cultural diversity is viewed by educators as diversity, not defect.

Yes No N/A

13. Educators are more cognizant and sensitive to the needs of cultural and linguistically diverse students.

Yes No N/A

## EVALUATION OF WINTER 1993 INSERVICE TRAINING ON PREREFERRAL STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)

14. Such students are less apt to be referred due to the knowledge presented in this course.

Yes No N/A

---

15. Educators more clearly understand the purpose of the SED's New Compact for Learning.

Yes No N/A

---

16. Information/Strategies presented in the Compact are applicable to the education of LEP students.

Yes No N/A

---

17. The methodologies employed in special education were shown to be ineffective for students simply acquiring a second language.

Yes No N/A

---

18. The bibliographies and handouts of the presenters are an aide for future reference.

Yes No N/A

---

19. Students who come with little education from their home countries need a developmental program, not a remedial or special education program.

Yes No N/A

---

20. Course participants believe that such a program can be initiated in their school setting.

Yes No N/A

---

# APPENDIX I

# EVALUATION OF SPANISH FOR PROFESSIONALS

EVALUATION OF SPANISH FOR PROFESSIONALS

**Spanish Language Course**

Please rate the following items as they relate to your success in this course.

5 = Highest 1 = Lowest

I The language taught met your professional needs.

5 4 3 2 1

II The methods of instruction facilitated acquisition of simple phrases in the language.

5 4 3 2 1

III The materials presented were useful to you as a language learner.

5 4 3 2 1

IV The instructor was well prepared and varied her delivery according to topic and/or need.

5 4 3 2 1

V The instructor actively engaged all participants in language activities.

5 4 3 2 1

COMMENTS:

# APPENDIX J

# EVALUATION OF SPANISH FOR COMMUNICATION

EVALUATION OF SPANISH FOR COMMUNICATION

**Spanish Language Course**

Please rate the following items as they relate to your success in this course.

5 = Highest 1 = Lowest

I The language taught met your professional needs.

5 4 3 2 1

II The methods of instruction facilitated acquisition of simple phrases in the language.

5 4 3 2 1

III The materials presented were useful to you as a language learner.

5 4 3 2 1

IV The instructor was well prepared and varied her delivery according to topic and/or need.

5 4 3 2 1

V The instructor actively engaged all participants in language activities.

5 4 3 2 1

COMMENTS:

# APPENDIX K

## THE WRITER'S INTRODUCTORY LETTER, EVALUATION FORM AND BOOKLET

THE WRITER'S INTRODUCTORY LETTER, EVALUATION FORM AND BOOKLET

Barbara A. Christina
47 Highland Down
Shoreham, NY 11786
516-744-3190

November 23, 1992

Dear Educators,

Please accept this complimentary first draft of *Intervention Strategies for the Education of the Linguistic and Culturally Diverse Student: A Proactive Approach to Prevent Inappropriate Referrals of Potential English Speakers to Special Education Settings.*

After reading this booklet, would you be so kind as to assist me in evaluating the information provided. Please complete the questionnaire included with the booklet and return it in the stamped self-addressed envelope.

This booklet is part of my major practicum at Nova University. I am enrolled at Nova as a student for the degree of Doctor of Education. Therefore your evaluation of my work is essential to my practicum outcome. Feel free to write to me for further clarifications.

Thank you for your cooperation with this project.

Sincerely,

Barbara Christina
Nova Student

Please rate this first draft by choosing a number according to the Likert scale.

The booklet provides strategies that mainstream classroom teachers can implement.

——1——————2——————3——————4——————5———

| Strongly Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | No Opinion | Somewhat Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

The assessment process of LEP students is stressed as a complex process.

——1——————2——————3——————4——————5———

| Strongly Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | No Opinion | Somewhat Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

The total assessment process is an important determinant as to whether a CLD student truly has a handicap.

——1——————2——————3——————4——————5———

| Strongly Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | No Opinion | Somewhat Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

The role of the parents of LEP students cannot be overlooked.

——1——————2——————3——————4——————5———

| Strongly Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | No Opinion | Somewhat Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

The role of administration is seen as vital to the success of LEP students.

——1——————2——————3——————4——————5———

| Strongly Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | No Opinion | Somewhat Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

Training of interpreters/translators cannot be ignored.

——1——————2——————3——————4——————5———

| Strongly Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | No Opinion | Somewhat Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

# Intervention Strategies for the Education of the Linguistic and Culturally Diverse Student: A Proactive Approach to Prevent Inappropriate Referrals of Potential English Speakers to Special Education Settings

by

Barbara Christina

edited by Theresa Rodriguez

© 1992

Barbara Christina is a director of a Bilingual Education Technical Assistance Center (BETAC) in New York State. She is presently a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. This booklet is written as part of the author's practicum, as a partial requirement for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Barbara Christina is a member of several professional organizations whose work impacts the education of language minority students. Barbara is a former foreign language teacher, ESL teacher, and foreign exchange student coordinator. She has made several presentations at professional conferences and has edited and written newsletters for professional organizations. She has recently been nominated to Who's Who in American Education.

Acknowledgements

The author acknowledges her advisors Dr. Anne Hocutt, Dr. Barry Birnbaum, and Dr. Mary Ellen Sapp of Nova University for their support and counsel with this project.

Special thanks is given to Theresa Rodriguez who had the task of editing this publication. The author is grateful for her analysis of subject matter and style.

Appreciation is also expressed to Linda Reilly, the typesetter, who helped to pull together this first version.

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## Preface

This booklet is a simple resource for interested educators who work with limited English proficient (LEP) students. The writer hopes that the information provided will motivate educators to seek further training and/or consult the literature of those considered to possess expertise in the area of bilingual education and bilingual special education.

Bilingual education as used in this work focuses on the discipline of English as a Second Language (ESL). However, the writer writes for both audiences: the ESL professional and the bilingual professional. Other audiences deemed important are: educators in the mainstream classroom, administrators, counselors, psychologists, pupil personnel directors, other support personnel, and parents.

The booklet presents strategies for educators of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students. The LEP student in the mainstream classroom, the role of the ESL teacher, the assessment of LEP students, and the role of parents, administrators, and interpreters are topics included in the various sections of this work.

The writer hopes the booklet serves the purpose of creating an awareness in educators that referral and placement in special education classes is not justifiable for every LEP student. LEP students are gifted and talented, average, and below average, and may be genuinely

handicapped. Each student must have educational programs tailored to his/her unique needs and abilities.

Barbara Christina

1992

## Introduction

Mainstream teachers have enormous responsibilities packed into a 6½ to 7 hour school day. The tasks are to teach various subject matters to a variety of learners. The job is becoming further complicated by the increasing numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students entering into our nation's school systems.

Many of these youngsters bring a rich and full bilingualism and biculturalism to the classroom. On the other hand, some may enter our schools devoid of linguistic abilities and cultural experiences that promote learning. Classroom teachers are asked to service these students, and few have received sufficient training in this area.

This booklet focuses on the mainstream content area teacher and the linguistic and culturally diverse student. Mainstream teachers need to be cognizant of strategies to help such students experience success rather than failure. It is this constant failure to master the language, to grasp the subject matter, to understand the school culture, that is frustrating to the LEP youngster and the teacher. This frustration eventually leads to a referral for a suspected handicapping condition initiated by the teacher who genuinely believes such placement is in the best interest of the student.

This publication is not a panacea for success in dealing with CLD students. It is the writer's intent to

present sufficient information and resources so that educators can access these sources of information and expand their knowledge base. It is only through acquisition and application of acquired learnings that teachers can appropriately place students in the learning environment best suited to their individual needs.

## The Limited English Proficient Student in the Mainstream Classroom

The LEP students will be at risk of failure if mainstream teachers are not cognizant of ways to fully involve such students in the classroom. Student self-esteem and a strong sense of ethnic identity are crucial elements for academic success.

Educators need to be sensitized to creating an ambiance that allows for cultural pluralism. Cummins' (1989) theoretical framework for the empowerment of minority students urges teachers to become facilitators, not transmitters, of discrete learning skills; advocates that teachers incorporate students' cultures and parents in the learning process to thus keep the CLD parents involved not only in the classroom, but in the school and community. Educators must refrain from finding the problems in the CLD student and look to the larger framework that encompasses the school and classroom: namely those who dictate and establish policy. Educators need to realize that many

problems are not located physically within the LEP youngster but are a result of society and a culture that disallows and views differences as deficits (Cummins, 1989).

The classroom teachers' perspective has to be one of inclusion. Teacher appreciation and inclusion of the rich array of linguistic and cultural differences can ward off failure and promote success.

Simple techniques, such as where to sit the newly arrived LEP student, eye contact, a warm smile, a display of keen interest, go a long way in promoting success. Understanding, by educators, that acquisition of language for basic communication skills and language for academic purpose are two vastly different skills is a prerequisite for success with CLD students (Cummins, 1984). Language for communication in everyday situations is much easier to acquire than is the language for comprehension of textbook materials. Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) can take as long as seven years to acquire, whereas Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) can be acquired successfully in two to four years (Cummins, 1984).

To sum up succinctly, children do not learn to speak the language of a textbook as rapidly as they do the language that allows normal communication with peers. Misidentification of what stage the learner is at in acquiring the second language ($L_2$) can lead educators to erroneously believe that a youngster has a deficit rather

than a difference.

Cummins (1984, 1989) and Collier and Hoover (1987) have written extensively on this subject area. Educators ought to begin a professional library on literature related to the successful education of the CLD learner in the mainstream.

## Assessment of LEP Students

Assessment of limited English proficient students is an area fraught with complexities and ambiguities as to what constitutes assessment. This section will focus on a holistic/ecological assessment that educators should have in place prior to initiating a referral.

Many variables impact on a CLD student's life which can positively or negatively affect student success. Teachers have to consider the students' prior experiences, culture, proficiency in the native language ($L_1$) and in the second language ($L_2$), learning style, and motivation as variables that can predict success. Other variables are curriculum exposure and instructional strategies found in the mainstream class. Teachers themselves have various styles of teaching, perceptions and expectations, proficiencies in languages, training and/or lack of training in ESL or bilingual methodologies, views on cultural diversity, and available or a lack of available resources and training opportunities (Garcia & Ortiz, 1988).

The above variables are presented in an article

entitled "Preventing Inappropriate Referrals of Language Minority Students to Special Education" (Garcia & Ortiz, 1988). The article presents a comprehensive and novel approach to working with and assessing CLD students. The article is available from the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education and is listed in the references at the end of this booklet.

Cloud (1991), and in many of her presentations at professional conferences and workshops, predicts that CLD students will continue to be inappropriately referred for special testing and placement unless such students are viewed from various perspectives and are assessed by trained bilingual multidisciplinary personnel. Cloud believes in an ecological assessment. All facets of a LEP student's life and prior/present school experiences have to be part of the assessment process.

Readers are encouraged to obtain copies of Guidelines for Services to Students with Limited English Proficiency and Special Education Needs in New York State, a state education department (SED) publication (The University of the State of New York, 1990) which specifies the nature of assessment for CLD students who may be handicapped.

Collier and Hoover (1987), Cummins (1984), and Baca and Cervantes (1991) believe that LEP students are often inappropriately referred to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) due to misinterpretations of cultural

differences. Collier and Hoover (1987) further maintain that behaviors exhibited with learning a second language are mistaken for deficits and/or displays of a handicap.

Prejudice and racial bias also play a strong role in the assessment of CLD students. Recognition that years of bias has had the effect of disabling rather than enabling minority language students helps educators to place the problem justifiably in the majority culture and not in the minority youngster's head (Cummins, 1989).

Assessment of CLD students is an area in need of further research. There are no magical test instruments to enable educators to make a firm decision. There is only a need for culturally sensitive teachers who are willing to take that extra step to insure that linguistic and cultural minority youngsters have "equity and excellence" (The University of the State of New York, 1990) accorded to them in the American school systems in our nation.

## The Role of the English As a Second Language Teacher

No longer are ESL teachers asked to simply teach vocabulary items that allow LEP students to acquire language skills for survival in the school environment. ESL educators teach content area subjects with various approaches tailored to the needs of LEP students, the gifted and talented LEP students, and the appropriately identified handicapped LEP student.

Many travel to several school buildings and have students with various proficiency levels crammed into small quarters and served during the same time frame. The job of teaching CLD students is becoming more complex, and the ESL professional is becoming highly recognized for the training and skills he/she brings to each classroom situation.

The ESL professional and the school building professionals have another obligation: they must work together to find common planning time, to create joint lesson plans, and to team teach.

The ESL teacher can help the content area teacher to break down material so that concepts are taught with simplified vocabulary. Tests can be constructed to assess the growth of the LEP student even though that growth may not occur as rapidly as it does for the proficient speaker of English.

ESL teachers need to make time to meet the faculty in the schools that they serve. Joining a curriculum committee, the PTA, and other organizations gives the teacher visibility and credibility. By speaking at a faculty meeting about their unique training and skills, ESL teachers can help to create bonds with various faculty members.

It is the responsibility of ESL professionals to be sure building administrators know them and understand the difficult nature of their work. Having an administrator as

an ally helps the ESL teacher work out difficult scheduling problems and aides the teacher in working with all faculty members.

Content area teachers should not be hesitant to call upon the ESL teacher to be present at parent conferences, to provide an informal evaluation of the student's skills, to join in on child study teams, and to clarify difficult concepts for the child and/or parent. In other words, the mainstream faculty and the itinerant ESL teacher need to connect.

Since the ESL teacher works in small groups with LEP students, these educators have the advantage of getting to know/understand their students. Teachers in the regular class should meet with and discuss problems relating to the success of the LEP student with the ESL teacher. Even if no real problems are evident, the ESL teacher and mainstream teacher can establish vital links with each other. Establishing such partnerships will benefit a LEP student who is floundering, and planned courses of action between the ESL teacher and mainstream faculty will prove to be more fruitful than detrimental to the success of the LEP student.

## Methodologies that Build Bridges for Success

There is a proliferation of literature in the marketplace that speaks of successful practices mainstream teachers can put in place to prevent the CLD student from

becoming at risk of failure and/or to prevent an inappropriate referral for special testing to determine if a handicap is present. This section will describe briefly strategies that can help CLD students to prosper in the ambiance of the 20th century classroom.

The publication Guidelines for Services to Students With Limited English Proficiency and Special Education Needs in New York State, issued in 1990 by the University of the State of New York, lists prereferral strategies that can be applied to LEP students who are performing poorly. In New York State, educators have to put these strategies into place and to document their implementation.

The guidelines read as follows:

> . . . the following activities should be undertaken in a general education setting and documented prior to referral for special education services:
>
> 1. Participation in an academic readiness type program. This type of program is one specifically designed by the local education agency (LEA) for students who have had little or no formal schooling, for the purpose of enhancing their transition into the "culture of the school." Such programs should include the following, as appropriate:
>
> i. experiential-based educational methodology and techniques;

ii. hands-on enrichment activities and community/school participation;

iii. native language development and enrichment;

iv. instruction in literacy skills in the native language and in English;

v. the use of specialized ESL methodology and strategies across all curriculum areas;

vi. school and community orientation;

vii. reinforcement of self-identity, self-concept, and interpersonal skill development across contexts;

viii. strategies designed to develop proficiency in behaviors necessary in academic settings (e.g., raising hand, eye contact). (p. 3)

In addition to the strategies presented by the State of New York's state education department, educators should pursue various training opportunities to help the LEP student experience academic growth. Process writing, portfolio and performance assessment, collaborative learning, whole language strategies, and higher order thinking skills are methodologies currently taught in staff development workshops and employed in classrooms. These methodologies can be used to promote the academic growth and success of CLD students. The promotion of academic growth and success increases LEP learners' self-esteem, wards off failure and eventual referral for testing to determine if

there is a handicap.

As educators begin to understand that acquisition of $L_2$ is a developmental process over time and that cultural diversity is not cultural deficit, CLD students will be less apt to be referred. Linguistic and cultural diversity will not be understood as a deficit. Diversity does not equate with deficit.

## Working With Parents

Language minority parents need to be made to feel welcome in the schools and communities in which they reside. Language minority parents are the teachers' best ally. It behooves teachers to invite such parents to school and to discuss their children's work. There are usually community resources available to help teachers find interpreters for such parents.

CLD parents have to develop rapport with members of the school community. These parents can best describe their youngsters' physical, emotional, social, and cognitive growth. This information is invaluable to a teacher who may be caught in the web of referral or non-referral. Parents, no matter how much or little education they have been exposed to, do know and understand their children.

Information provided by parents can also clarify a student's history. Students who have been out of school, who have experienced socioeconomic distress, who come from

war torn countries, whose language and culture are vastly different from mainstream Americans are not candidates for referral according to the New York State guidelines (The University of the State of New York, 1990) and the writings of Cloud (1991).

Parents who have established trusting relations with school officials will not hesitate to describe deficits where deficits do exist. Parents want their children to achieve and thus are the teachers' best resource.

Segan and Segan (1991) advocate the creation of "training sessions" for LEP parents so that they can become more cognizant of their rights in the educational system and methods to support school programs, both in the school and at home. School officials can make parents aware that no matter how limited their skills are in $L_1$ and/or $L_2$, they are their children's first teachers, and this role, no matter how simple or complex, can be continued as children progress through school (Segan & Segan, 1991).

## Use of Interpreters

Interpreters can always be found through members of the local community church, school, and other service agencies. However, interpreters and/or translators need to be cognizant of what it is they are translating.

A meeting with interpreters before a planned conference/evaluation is essential. The interpreter must

fully comprehend the nature of the situation that requires his/her services. Unknowingly, interpreters will view a situation from their own framework, and thus may transfer a message to a CLD parent or to school officials that does not signify the issue at hand Such misinformation can lead to inappropriate referrals.

Fradd and Willen (1991) maintain that interpreters have to be trained and cognizant of the field of bilingual special education before assessment of a LEP student commences. Misunderstanding due to misinterpretation complicates rather than clarifies the assessment process.

## The Vital Role of School Administrators

Principals can play a crucial role as advocates for CLD students and families. They are placed in leadership positions which permit them to create an ambiance of multicultural sensitivity. According to Segan and Segan (1991),

> Principals not only can support a bilingual/multicultural philosophy and mission in their own schools, but they can also lend support to colleague principals. Demonstration of elective bilingual/multicultural programs can add strength to the district's overall policy of serving linguistic and culturally diverse students. Successful initiative can provide a base for school board support of expansion of

such efforts. (p. 100)

School leaders can encourage and make time for curricular work to be carried out to thus allow teachers, newly recruited and veterans, to meet and dialogue and select culturally relevant curriculum for their diverse populations. Minority teachers can serve as models and resources to help set the tone of a multicultural ambiance in the local school and community (Segan & Segan, 1991).

## Closing Remarks

Today's CLD children are potential ambassadors who bring a rich array of assets to the local school and communities in which they reside. To find fault in such students where none exists is to deny these children their right to a full educational development. Furthermore, this denial robs contemporary society of the contribution that can be made by such bilingual multicultural children and their families.

Our nation need never be devoid of creative bilingual citizens who are able to teach us the true meaning of equality and community for democracy (Comer, 1986).

## Acronyms

CSE - Committee on Special Education.

CLD - culturally and linguistically diverse: refers to those whose culture and language is different from the majority. The term also includes the non native speaker of the English language.

ESL - English as a Second Language: refers to teaching English to speakers of other languages. ESL is a discipline within Bilingual Education.

$L_1$ - refers to the maternal language, the first language learned.

$L_2$ - refers to the language the LEP or CLD student is to master or is in the process of learning.

LEP - limited English proficient: refers to the non native speakers of the English language.

SED - state education department.

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## APPENDIX L

TABLE 5: RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE OF THE WRITER'S BOOKLET

TABLE 5: RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE OF THE WRITER'S BOOKLET

| Likert Scale | 1 Strongly Disagree | 2 Somewhat Disagree | 3 No Opinion | 4 Somewhat Agree | 5 Strongly Agree | Total Teachers Surveyed |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| QUESTIONS 1 | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | |

Questions:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

# APPENDIX M

## FLYERS DISTRIBUTED FOR INSERVICE TRAININGS

## FLYERS DISTRIBUTED FOR INSERVICE TRAININGS

Fall 1992

COURSE TITLE

Special Education and the Limited English Proficient Student: Are All Placements Justifiable?

SESSIONS

October 16: Overview of SED guidelines for the education of LEP students and/or LEP students who may be handicapped. Definitions of bilingual education, English as a second language, special education and bilingual special education. Resources available to educators such as BETAC, SETRC, and SEALTA.

November 2: Assessment of the limited English proficient students who may exhibit a handicapping condition. This assessment will feature an ecological approach. These strategies which encompass an ecological assessment can also be used as prereferral strategies by classroom teachers.

November 9: Portfolio Assessment. This technique can be used with all students and will be demonstrated as an alternate way to assess student progress.

November 16: Process Writing. This session will feature how to incorporate the writing process into classroom activities which will allow students to succeed no matter how limited their vocabulary may be.

November 23: Cooperative Learning. Collaboration in the classroom will be seen as a tool for helping students experience success and acceptance by peers.

November 30: How children acquire language will be the focus of the first half of this session; the second half will focus on the use of Whole Language strategies and the creation of a literate environment in the home and in the classroom.

December 7: The final session will focus on the orientation of newly arrived linguistically and culturally diverse students to the American school climate. How to create an experiential base for new language learners will be presented, as well as the use of critical thinking skills to facilitate active use of the new language.

Educators will find that strategies presented throughout this training can be used with all students, not only the linguistically and culturally diverse student.

Winter 1993

Course Title: Strategies to Prevent Limited English Proficient Students From Becoming At Risk.

Designed for: Administrators, ESL teachers, special educators, classroom teachers and support personnel.

| Dates: | Instructors: |
|---|---|
| Saturday, Jan. 30, 1993<br>9 a.m. - 2 p.m. | Consultant<br>Heinle & Heinle |
| Saturday, Feb. 27, 1993<br>9 a.m. - 2 p.m. | Consultant<br>Intercultural Communication |
| Saturday, Mar. 13, 1993<br>9 a.m. - 2 p.m. | Consultant<br>ESL Teacher Trainer |

Site:

Description: This course is an in depth study of reasons why language minority students are inappropriately placed in special education. It addresses approaches to working with students who have little or no educational experience from their home country. Approaches to alternative assessment processes and strategies teachers can use on a daily basis will also be taught.

Participants will be evaluated by attending all three sessions, class participation, and a short assignment which can be completed at the last session.

Number of hours: 15 1 inservice credit

Course Title: Spanish for Communication

Designed for: Town workers, agency workers, school personnel, clerical workers, and service agency personnel.

Instructor:

Dates: Jan. 11, 25
Feb. 1, 8, 22
Mar. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Time: 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Site:

Description: Participants will learn simple phrases related to their particular job so as to facilitate communication with the Hispanic community. The instructor will determine the needs of individual participants so that adequate Spanish vocabulary and phrases will be provided.

Number of hours: 20
Maximum participants: 20
Cost: $25.00 - Checks made payable to:

To register, please mail check and bottom receipt to:

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Yes, I will attend the "Spanish for Communication" course starting Jan. 11, 1993.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Work Add. & # _____

Textbooks and tapes will be available for purchase.

Course Title: Spanish For Professionals

Designed for: Administrators, classroom teachers, counselors, psychologists, PPS directors, support personnel.

Instructor:

Dates: Jan. 11, 19, 25
Feb. 1, 8, 22
Mar. 1, 8, 15, 22

Time: 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Site:

Description: Participants will learn simple phrases related to school situations, health, family interaction, and whatever other topics the participants deem necessary. Time will be spent on the cultural characteristics represented by the various speakers of Spanish.

Describe how: Speakers will be evaluated by their ability to produce and use several simple statements in Spanish.

Number of hours: 30 hours for 2 inservice credits

Maximum participants: 15